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# CASUALTIES.

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A NOVEL.

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*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

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BY MARY GOLDSMITH,

AUTHOR OF THE COMEDY ENTITLED

SHE LIVES! OR, THE GENEROUS BROTHER.

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“ No Subterraneous Caverns—Haunted Castles—Enchanted Forests  
“ —Fearful Visions—Mysterious Voices—Supernatural Agents—  
“ Bloody Daggers—Dead Men’s Skulls—Mangled Bodies—Nor  
“ Marvellous Lights, form any Part of the present Work; but  
“ will be found, on Perusal, to arise out of Natural Incidents.”

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VOL. I.

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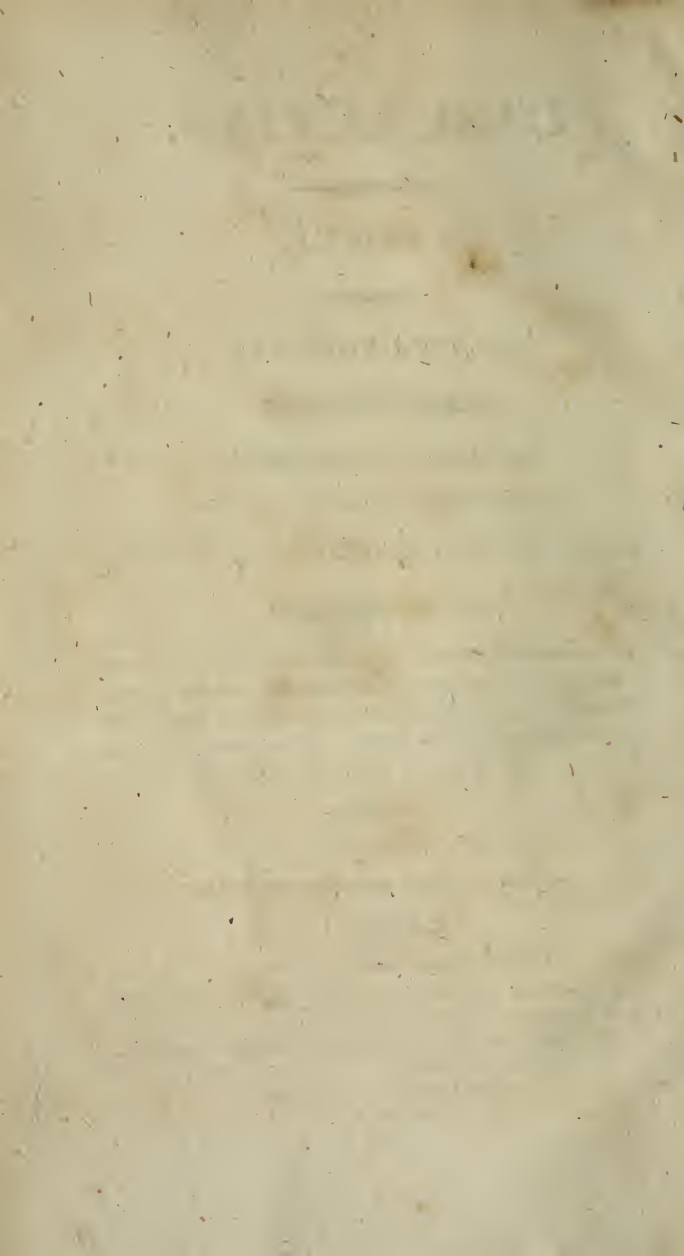
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1804.



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TO THE HONORABLE

MRS. A. M. EGERTON.



MADAM,

YOUR kind condescension  
in permitting me to dedicate to you the  
following trifle, while it gratifies my  
vanity, shews how a truly liberal mind  
can confer favors.

To delineate the wanderings of ima-  
gination, arising out of natural inci-  
dents, clothed in language and senti-  
ments calculated to touch and amend  
the heart, has been the principal aim of  
the author: with what ability the task  
is executed, is not for her to judge; but

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ALDEN

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should the feeble efforts of her pen afford you an hour's amusement, or in any respect contribute to the instruction and entertainment of her juvenile readers, the object proposed in the following sheets will be fully accomplished: the chief pride of whose author it will be to boast how much she is, with the truest sense of gratitude, for the honor of your generous patronage,

MADAM,

Your most faithful,

And truly devoted Servant,

MARY GOLDSMITH.

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## P R E F A C E.

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I HAVE somewhere met with an observation on writing in general, which, for its propriety, must have obtained the unequivocal suffrage of the world:—And in the *Petit Morceau littéraire*, which I now present to the public, it has been my endeavour to reduce the judicious precept into practice; trusting, that the errors therein will meet with that lenity from the critical reader, as from a liberal mind, especially when he admits the truth of

the following lines from the pen of the celebrated poet, *Butler*.

“ To love the power to forgive,  
“ Is empire and prerogative;  
“ And ’tis in crowns a nobler gem,  
“ To grant a pardon, than condemn.”

The writer I have above alluded to, said (if it lives correctly in my memory) that “ the principal and most essential art in writing well is, not to attend so much to the manner of expressing ourselves, as to the thoughts; and with respect to the thoughts, to seek not so much for those that are forced and brilliant, as for those that are simple and natural; for reason is less satisfied with forced and extravagant ones, than with those which immediately to the



object they refer to. Such as are merely shining and far-fetched, please us transiently only, and are incapable of fixing the attention: whereas, the simple and the natural ones give us permanent delight, and the more we study them, the more charming and beautiful they appear."

But there are other duties and qualifications necessary to every candidate for literary fame, particularly to those who would, through the medium of either truth or fiction, attempt to improve the manners of society. The moralist is a more valuable character than either the most profound scholar, or transcendent genius; for if the latter are not subject to the principles of the former, their publications are a pestilence to

mankind, in proportion to the magnitude of their powers, and the multiplicity of their works.

Amongst the many fashionable qualifications mankind, in general, seems emulous to attain, none affords a more truly pitiable reflection than the seduction of young women; and none, if we trace their pursuits with a speculative eye, is prosecuted with more brutal energy.

It has been frequently remarked, and particularly in a menial life, where beauty and even innocence have shed their unsullied sweets, that few have been able to consummate the nuptial tie with a reputation untainted by censure. Nay, how often do we meet with it in the most exalted, the most ele-

vated ranks. And how shocking is it to see a young female qualified both in sense, person, and every accomplishment to render the marriage state a state of true felicity, fall from the very summit of reputation and respect; a victim to the vile and base machinations of an artful paramour? The mountain wolves have their objects of prey separate from their own species; but man, having less humanity than inhuman beings, preys on the most endearing part of himself.

Beauty, united with engaging manners, carries with it irresistible attractions; all are wishing to partake, each jealous of the prize: envy fills the breast of the one sex, while animation fires that of the other. Exposed thus

to unlimited dangers, what power must assist in the regulation of their conduct, since on the one hand you are persecuted by the basest insinuations which rivalry never fails to inspire, whilst on the other you are attacked by the most specious artifices, flattering promises; and O, unhappy thought, the perjury of plighted love.

Mankind in general are of so frail a cast, so addicted to change, so biassed by vicissitudes, and their objects of pursuits so transitory and uncertain, that the greatest of blessings, when once enjoyed, become matters of mere neutral concern. The most violent of passions relax when sated; and the desire sickens as the appetite cloy. O ye that tread the paths of chastity, that

retain pure and inviolate the sweets of innocence ! Let not the wiles, the artful intrigues of man, rob you of that inestimable gem, which alone blesses the connubial bed ; for if the *will*, however fair and love-directed it appears, be once obtained, jealousies creep in, and the object of the tenderest, the most endearing affection, in a little time, becomes the object of caution and distrust. Love is like a deep unfathomable sea, on whose transparent glossy face the pliant oar skims till swelling tides call forth from their imperious beds the mighty waves, that baffling with unexpected shocks the pilot's skill, and plunge you eternally in the billow's waste, where no plank to grasp, no sea-mark to direct your

spreading arms, no eye to drop one tear of tender pity, speaks comfort to the expiring soul.

There are two principles which mankind have generally adopted in their systems of penal jurisprudence, in estimating the punishment due to an offender, the enormity of the vice as applying to the agent, and the consequence of his actions to the community. Were the crime of *seduction* to be judged, only judged by the latter, its punishment would be most exemplary; for of its baneful effects on the virtues of private life, (and which indeed are the foundation of *public*) every one is advised. The offspring of an impure amour are too often secluded from the benefits of paternal protec-



tion; and also in their helpless and infantine years are deprived of that maternal kindness so necessary to health, by which they are subjected to every fortuitous vice and debility of constitution, and neither add to the physical strength of the country by their population, nor to the aggregate of our national virtues. There are two objects which the law of any country should comprehend. Rule of conduct of its subjects, and their general and reciprocal protection; and wherever they are inefficient to such purposes, it necessarily argues, that they are not equal to the ends of sound policy and impartial justice. Wherever a subject may be deprived of his personal liberty by the machinations of villainy, at least for

any length of time, the presumption is too well founded that the laws are defective in their form and operation.

The latter observation having an immediate reference both to the moral and narrative contained in the following sheets, I have submitted them as a justification of both.

To these sentiments I have endeavoured to submit myself during its progress; and, should it cheer the hours of a rainy day, or add a legible line of instruction; should it in the smallest degree excite an emulation of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice, I trust the gentle reader will be amply rewarded in the perusal, and myself in the undertaking.

THE AUTHOR.



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# CASUALTIES.

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A Novel.

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IN the dreary month of November, when drooping nature was stripped of all her luxuriant beauties, Captain Aubery set out from London for his father's seat in the west of England. At the distance of about forty miles it occurred to him that a fellow collegian, whom he had not seen for a considerable time, owned an estate contiguous to the village where he stopped to change horses; and, as the evening was far advanced,

and extremely dark, he resolved to proceed no further, but took up his abode for that night at the inn, purposing to pay a visit to his friend the following morning.

The host conducted him to a neat little parlour with a good fire, where he had not been long seated, when his host re-entered, leading a young lady, apparently indisposed; he apologized for the intrusion, by saying he had not a fire kindled in any other room, and that the lady was only going to stop whilst fresh horses were preparing. Captain Aubery replied, that an apology was unnecessary under such circumstances, and drawing a chair towards the fire, begged she would be seated. Her youth and beauty naturally excited curiosity in the breast of Au-

bery, particularly as he perceived, by the changes of her countenance, that she laboured under a mental embarrassment. She strove to conceal her agitation, but it did not escape his penetrating eye. "Pardon me, Madam," said he, "I hope you are not travelling any great distance, at this late hour, unprotected." "I am going to London, Sir," replied the lady, in a tremulous voice, "and my companions are without." At that moment a voice vociferated, "Where's the lady, we're not going to shilly shally here all night?" With increased agitation she arose from her seat, and was proceeding towards the door, when Captain Aubery took her trembling hand, and begged she would permit him to attend her to the carriage. He led her forward, when,

with infinite concern, he beheld in her companions every thing united to shock and terrify feminine sensibility,—two fellows, whose appearance bespoke them destitute of every sentiment connected with humanity. As ascending the steps of the chaise, a tear from the lady's eye fell upon the hand of Aubery;—What can this mean, said he, mentally, some mystery envelops the fate of this lovely girl! I will follow them.—The chaise drove off.—He ordered a horse to be instantly saddled, and taking with him a brace of pistols, he immediately followed the travellers, but continued at some little distance, in order to watch their motions unobserved. They had proceeded thus a few miles, when suddenly the chaise stopped; one of the ruffians jumped out, and a cry of dis-

tress issued from the carriage. Captain Aubery rode up, sprang from his horse, opened the door, and presenting a pistol to the villain's head, dragged him from the chaise; the unhappy girl had sunk in the bottom of it in a swoon. He gave his horse to the care of the driver, and, after observing that the ruffians had made a precipitate retreat, he flew to her assistance, and raising her up, assured her she was safe; but she continued in a state of insensibility during their return to the inn, where he had ordered the post-boy to drive with all possible speed. His first inquiry was for the landlady, to whose care he committed his fair charge: She was conveyed to a chamber, and by the particular desire of her gallant champion treated with the utmost care and at-

tention. The shock her spirits had undergone from the brutality of her perfidious companions, rendered her insensible to every object around her, and in the morning her intellectual faculties were lost in a melancholy delirium. The landlady was the mother of a family, and she expressed with a maternal concern the unhappy situation of this lovely unprotected female. She hastened to Captain Aubery; "What is to be done, Sir," said she, "this unfortunate young lady is incapable of giving any account of herself? She is quite deranged. "Let every thing be done, Madam," answered Aubery, "that humanity dictates in behalf of suffering innocence; let the best medical assistance be procured, that this part of the country affords; I will guarantee every



expence, and in the mean time I shall endeavour to penetrate the source of this most extraordinary affair. It is probable that letters or papers about the lady's person may be found, which will lead to some elucidation; and, under such peculiar circumstances, the search cannot be considered a breach of propriety.

The hostess took the hint, and upon examining her pockets found a letter, addressed to Miss Sabina Melford, at Mrs. Drummond's, Great Portland-street, London. She immediately carried it to Captain Aubery, who read as follows:

CASUALTIES.

*Ealand, Yorkshire,*

DEAR SISTER, *Nov. 18, 1753.*

WE are all at this moment in the utmost distress; our dear mother is languishing under a malignant fever. Do not delay setting off on receipt of this. The coach, you know, sets out from the Swan in Lad-lane. I remain your affectionate brother,

HENRY MELFORD.

“It is evident,” said Captain Aubary, “that this lovely young woman has been torn by violence from her friends, at the very moment she was about to fulfil the injunction contained in her brother’s letter; for I perceive it was dated only four days ago. I will instantly write to this Mrs. Drummond; she is, no doubt, a friend or relative,



who, probably at this moment, is lamenting the mysterious fate of the unhappy girl.

Captain Aubery, after having dispatched a letter to the post, proceeded to the next town, where concluding they had changed horses, judged he might procure some information relating to this singular incident; and where we shall for a short time leave him, and return to our heroine.

Mr. Melford, the father of Sabina, was the illegitimate son of a gentleman in the north of England, who after dissipating a very affluent fortune, at an early age, betook himself to a foreign climate. The wreck of his property was a small estate in Yorkshire, which previous to his departure he settled on his infant son, appointing Mr.

Edwards, a gentleman of independent fortune and irreproachable character, his trustee, to whose management and discretion he confided the education of his boy; but, for reasons best known to himself, and which will hereafter appear, he requested that the child should bear the name of his mother.

During Mr. Melford's minority, the worthy guardian acquitted himself towards the youth with parental tenderness, and perceived, with infinite pleasure and satisfaction, in his ward the dawnings of a noble, generous, and virtuous mind. At the age of twenty-one he took possession of his paternal estate, and shortly after that period united his fate with that of an amiable young woman, who, in the space of ten years, made him the happy father of a son and

five daughters : But human felicity, ever precarious, Providence had ordained should not reign long unmolested ! The unerring shafts of death dissolved the fond union, and Mrs. Melford was left a disconsolate widow, with six children, to mourn her irreparable loss. Sabina was the eldest ; at the age of fourteen, having compleated her education, she was placed under the protection of Mrs. Drummond, a mantua-maker of eminence in her profession, for a term of three years. The heart of Mrs. Melford, fraught with tender solicitude for the welfare of her beloved offspring, figured to her imagination, that by furnishing the eldest with a genteel trade, it might, in the space of a few years, become an establishment for the younger branches of her family.

The unconscious parent perceived not the perilous situation in which she was placing her lovely daughter; for be it known to our readers, that the uncommon beauty, and perfect symmetry, of Sabina Melford, even at the early age of fourteen, was throughout the country a general theme of admiration. The moral and virtuous principles which from precedent she had imbibed, at an early period, united to an innate modesty, Mrs. Melford flattered herself were sufficient barriers to shield her from the paths of danger. But her conspicuous charms could not long be concealed from the observing eye of profligacy; various plans were concerted by the abandoned art of her own sex to allure and tempt her from the path of honor, but with a virtuous scorn she spurned the glittering bait;

thus far she realized a fond parent's hope, strictly adhering to those religious principles which had so carefully been inculcated into her infant mind.

But now the moment, big with events, was at hand, adverse fate threatening to overwhelm our beautiful heroine. The term of her apprenticeship was within a few months of closing, when she received from her brother the letter already stated. Prompted by tender concern, she flew on the wings of filial affection to the Swan in Ladlane, unmindful of any thing in the street until she arrived at the coach office in the inn yard. Whilst she was securing a place for that evening in the stage, she observed an elderly woman standing by her, whom she recollected to have frequently seen before, and who



had often made an effort to become acquainted with her in the street.—Her mind, however, at this moment, was so wholly occupied with the melancholy information she had received, that without bestowing a thought on this woman, she hastened home in order to make the necessary preparations for her journey; and, at the appointed hour, returned to the city. The evening was very dark: just as she was turning into the inn yard, she heard a female voice repeat, “Now is your time,” and instantly two men seized and lifted her into a chaise, one of them holding a pistol to her breast, whilst the other bound a handkerchief over her eyes, and immediately drove off.

Inconceivable horror for a time deprived her of the power of speech.

Resistance was impracticable. She at length strove to interest the ruffians by relating the situation of an only surviving parent, whose life was despaired of, and to whom she was then hastening; perhaps, to take a long and last farewell. "Oh pity a miserable orphan," said she, "think on my sufferings: you shall be rewarded for my liberty; for I know you are only the agents of that wicked woman.—" "True," said one of the villains; "but we cannot betray our trust; we are employed to convey you to a nobleman's seat, and about fifty miles will terminate your journey. "Almighty God protect me!" replied Sabina, perceiving they were equally deaf to the voice of reason as of pity:—Despair and unutterable anguish now seized her trembling frame, and giving her-

self up for lost, she sat like one petrified with silent grief during the whole of the journey. The same chaise was continued, the driver having received instructions to change only horses at their respective stages, so that no opportunity was offered her of escape in a state little short of madness. Sabina at length reached the place of destination. She startled as if awakened from a terrific dream, at the sound of a bell. The carriage stopped, the park-gates were thrown open, and they proceeded towards a Gothic mansion, situated in the centre, when the chaise drew up to the house. She fainted; and in that deplorable state was conducted to an apartment, insensible for some hours to every thing that passed. Exhausted nature, at length began to reanimate—she opened



her eyes, when all she beheld appeared like magic. Extended on a magnificent couch she raised herself, and gazing around the room, which portrayed the true emblems of modern grandeur; and perceiving she was alone, hastily arose, and falling on her knees, implored the protection of Heaven. At that moment an elderly woman entered the apartment, and with a countenance expressive of concern, approached Sabina with congratulations at finding her so much recovered. Sabina, encouraged by her apparent sympathy, snatched her hand and burst into tears. "My good madam," said she, "have you ever experienced the tender anxiety of a parent? If you are a mother, you will feel for me a sentiment of pity." And

she briefly related her sad story.

“ My dear young lady,” said she, “ I do indeed pity you to my heart, and am so grieved for your sufferings, that if I were even sure to lose my place when his lordship returns, for he is now in London, you shall not be detained here a moment longer than whilst you take some refreshment.”

The voice of an angel could not have conveyed more consolation to the drooping spirits of our afflicted heroine.

“ Dear, dear good Madam,” she replied, “ am I then at liberty to return? Is there any stage-coach by which I can instantly proceed into Yorkshire?” “ I will inquire,” resumed the humane housekeeper, and quitting the

room, left Sabina nearly overpowered with transports of joy.

Returning in a few minutes she informed her, that there being no mode of conveyance from that part of the country, she must return to London to go into Yorkshire. “The men,” continued she, “who brought you hither, have promised me they will conduct you back in perfect safety; and they are vowing vengeance against the promoter of this journey; and, as they can have no interest in your detention here, I have no doubt but they will fulfil their promise.”—The mind of Sabina, upon this assurance, became more tranquil, and after taking some refreshment bade adieu to the friendly housekeeper, putting herself under the protection of those wretches, the bare thought of

whom, a short time before, shocked her very soul; nor did she for a moment reflect upon her own personal safety, so wholly was her eager thoughts engrossed by the tender recollection of her mother, and every moment seemed an age until she could reach the road that led to the place of her nativity. As she sat thus silently anticipating the sweet idea of soon beholding her affectionate parent, one of the fellows accosted his comrade; "This is a pretty humbug piece of business; how do you relish it, Jack?"—"Oh," replied the other, "I think it a devilish good joke—What say you, my little angel?" throwing his arm about her waist, from which she shrunk with terror, apprehending the worst from their brutality: yet she strove to preserve an equanimity of deportment, the

better to disguise her fears. In this distracted state of mind she arrived at the inn, half determined to disclose her fears, particularly on her introduction to Captain Aubery, whom she discovered to be a man of delicate and refined sensibility; but her forbearance proceeded from the following motives: First, the housekeeper assured her she would by these men be conveyed to London with all convenient speed. Secondly, she feared that a disclosure would tend to impede the prosecution of her journey into Yorkshire; lastly, she was destitute of the pecuniary means sufficient to defray the expences of her travelling post to London. This train of conflicting ideas it was that tortured her imagination, when Aubery handed her to the carriage, and felt a

tear drop upon his hand. It is indeed an indisputable fact, that Sabina was indebted to that fortuitous epoch for her miraculous preservation.

But to return to our hero, whom we left in pursuit of information, though all he could learn was, that a young lady, accompanied by two men, had changed horses on the road, in passing to and from the seat of Lord G——, and it was conjectured that her quick return was owing to his lordship being in London. With this unsatisfactory intelligence he returned to the inn; where he found the unhappy girl, languishing under a melancholy delirium. I shall not proceed on my journey, said he, addressing himself to the host, until this unfortunate young lady is restored to her friends. I will protect her with



my life and fortune. A female in distress has a legitimate claim on man's protection. The landlady now entered the room, anxious to gain from Captain Aubery the result of his inquiries.

When accompanied by her, he paid a visit to the invalid, and with increased concern he beheld the lovely sufferer in a state of mind bordering on phrenzy. The heart of Aubery, ever tenderly alive to the soft impressions of humanity, became doubly susceptible on the present occasion; her unaffected beauty and prepossessing manners had excited in his bosom a sensation of virtuous love, and he anxiously looked forward to the moment that brought him an answer from Mrs. Drummond. On the following day he received a letter, but its contents was

far from satisfactory, and involved the mind of Aubery in unpleasing conjectures, as it was couched in terms which seemed to implicate him as an accomplice in the conspiracy, concluding with an assurance that she should lose no time, but immediately hasten to the relief of Miss Melford.

It is to be presumed, that when Mrs. Drummond received the melancholy intelligence relating to Sabina, whom she, at that time, concluded was under a parent's roof, her mind was torn by various apprehensions for her safety, and rendered incapable of forming any opinion in favour of her preserver; she therefore made a laconic reply to Captain Aubery's letter, and immediately hastened to the house of a confidential friend, a widow lady of

independent fortune, with whom Miss Melford had always been a prodigious favorite. She read the mysterious epistle, paused for a moment in silent astonishment, and with a perspicuity incident to strong minds, developed the mystery. "This amiable girl," said Mrs. Delrymple, "unconscious of her personal attractions, has either by artifice been decoyed, or by force trepaned, by some abandoned profligate, on the very evening she was repairing to the York coach; and it appears to me, she has been rescued by this gentleman. But there is no time for further conjectures: go, my good friend, instantly go, and arrange your domestic concerns. Mean time, a chaise shall be ordered, and I will myself accompany you. Dear innocent girl, I feel for her almost a pa-

rent's concern. What dread sensations at this moment must wring her filial bosom: thus torn by the rude hand of violence, from her dearest connections, every nerve of sensibility is fraught with the keenest sense of anguish; let us then fly, and snatch her from despair."

"You have, my dear madam, kindly anticipated my ardent wish;" rejoined Mrs. Drummond. "The guileless heart of that amiable child, indeed is suffering most acutely this unmerited persecution. I shall hasten home, and will, in the space of an hour, be ready to attend you."

Their plan being finally adjusted, they set out on their journey, and, travelling by night, reached the place of destination the following morning. On their arrival, they learnt that Miss Mel-

ford betrayed favorable symptoms of amendment. Mrs. Drummond, previous to visiting the invalid, enquired for the gentleman from whom she had received intelligence of Sabina. Captain Aubery, by this time having heard of their arrival, entered the room. The ladies eyed each other with a degree of surprise, at his approach; having figured to their imagination, that Miss Melford had been rescued from her perilous situation by some well-meaning humane countryman: such had been the idea formed by Mrs. Delrymple, and who had converted her friend to the same opinion. To behold in the preserver of Sabina, an officer in the British navy; young, his countenance and figure uncommonly prepossessing, united to an



unassuming dignity, which not only excited admiration, but commanded esteem.

After passing a short time in conversation with Captain Aubery, they accompanied the nurse to Sabina's apartment: as they approached the bed-side, she raised herself on the pillow. The almost dying embers of exhausted nature re-kindled at the sight of her worthy friends, and joy sparkled in her languid eyes. She held out her hand; and that which Mrs. Drummond most dreaded, was the subject of her first enquiry. "My mother, my dear mother," she repeated: Not receiving an immediate answer, she sunk senseless on the pillow. However, a few minutes restored to animation her sinking spirits, when Mrs. Delrymple took her hand, which



she moistened with the tear of genuine sensibility, addressed her in terms calculated to sooth her sorrows; and concluded by assuring her, that the moment her doctor pronounced her sufficiently convalescent to undertake the journey, she would herself accompany her into Yorkshire. This was a theme, of all others, most congenial to her filial bosom. The evening was now far advanced, and the ladies apprehensive that Sabina, in her weak state, might suffer from the sudden exertion of spirits, took an affectionate leave of their young friend, and retired for the night. The morning produced a favorable change; the fever had totally subsided; and the beloved idea of re-visiting the place of her nativity, contributed in no small degree to facilitate her recovery. The

ladies arose at an early hour, and on their way to Sabina's chamber was met by Captain Aubery, who, after the usual morning's salutation, begged he might have the pleasure of paying his respects to Miss Melford, when she was sufficiently recovered to quit her confinement. Mrs. Drummond expressed herself in the warmest terms of gratitude for her miraculous preservation, adding, that she hoped her young friend would very shortly be enabled to thank him in person, for his generous conduct towards her. They now hastened to Sabina, whose appearance bespoke a quick return of health: and when they had finished their morning repast, she entered into a full elucidation of every circumstance which had befallen her, from the time of her leaving Mrs. Drum-

mond, to the period when Captain Auberry snatched her from the impending fate which threatened her. "Have you seen the gentleman, madam?" continued she. A faint blush, as she spoke, tinged her palid cheek. "I have, my dear," said Mrs. D. "it was from that gentleman I gained instructions where to find you." "Oh, how much I am indebted," resumed Sabina, "to his generous sympathy." "Indeed you are, Miss Melford," said Mrs. Delrymple, "and if I might be permitted to offer an opinion, I think it adviseable, as we purpose quitting this place to-morrow, that we should invite Captain Aubery to take dinner with us to-day; you will then have an opportunity, my love, of returning thanks to your gallant preserver." Thus agreed, an invitation was

dispatched to Capt. Aubery; it was cordially accepted; and, at the appointed hour, the invalid was, by her friends, introduced to the dining parlour, where sat our hero. He arose from his seat, and taking Sabina by the hand, warmly congratulated her on the return of health. Our heroine, perhaps, never appeared more divinely interesting than at this moment. A few days indisposition had robbed her cheek of that crimson glow of health incident to a florid complexion, and had left a delicate langour, calculated to inspire admiration. She modestly thanked Captain Aubery for the peculiar interest he had manifested in her behalf; when he, with equal diffidence, replied, "I shall ever consider it, madam, as one of the happiest incidents of my life, that I was destined to

rescue innocence from the grasp of villainy. I have discovered the origin of this flagrant outrage," continued Aubery, "whom, I am sorry to add, is a peer of the realm, and it is much to be lamented, that a man's illustrious birth should shield him from the chastisement due to the crime of meditated seduction. Had this conspiracy been accomplished by a juvenile profligate, no power should screen him from my resentment; but his age protects him from the vengeance of my arm.

Thus, in a strain of apathy, the noble-minded Aubery commented on a crime, the atrocity of which no sophistry can palliate; and concluded by informing the ladies, that he should in a few weeks return to London; when, with their permission, he would do him-



self the honor to inquire after Miss Melford's health. Mrs. Delrymple presented him with her card; and as the evening was approaching, they took their leave of Capt. Aubery for the night. The following day being agreed upon for their departure, the two elder ladies having ordered a chaise, and were settling with the landlady, Sabina and Captain Aubery were seated near the window in earnest conversation; when suddenly a post-chaise and four drove furiously up to the door. "Pardon me, madam," said Aubery, with apparent agitation, and perceiving it to be the carriage of Lord G——, instantly quitted the room. Sabina's eye was naturally attracted towards the window, when she reconnoitred the abandoned female by whose infamous machinations she had been



trepaned. Her presence of mind, at that moment, forsook her, and, in an exclamation of terror, sunk lifeless on the chair. Her matron friends, alarmed, rang the bell. Captain Aubery re-entered, and perceiving the situation of the afrighted girl, begged the ladies would, without delay, quit the house. "My servant," continued he, "shall attend you to London; leave me to confront those contemptuous characters, the appearance of whom has thus alarmed and terrified your young friend. Mrs. Delrympie had flown to Sabina, whose spirits now began to revive: "Oh, save me," said she, "from that wicked woman." "You are safe, Miss Melford," replied Aubery. Then turning to Mrs. Drummond, "your chaise is at the door, madam; permit me to at-

tend you;" and, taking Sabina's hand, accompanied them to the carriage. The moment they were seated, he ordered the driver to proceed with the utmost expedition. "Farewel, ladies," he continued, "till we meet again, farewel." On his return to the apartment, now desolate and forlorn, he was met by the host; who having been summoned to the presence of his noble visitor, Lord G——, almost breathless, accosted our hero as follows: "A fine kettle of fish truly, sir, this young body has made in my house; here I shall be turned out of it, and lose my licence into the bargain. This comes of folks meddling with matters that don't concern them; but I have laid all the blame upon you, sir; for you know it was all your fault the lady being

brought here. His lordship says you are a busy body; and I don't know how many more names he calls you." The patience of Aubery, nearly exhausted by the landlord's illiterate harangue, hastily replied, "Peace, coward; pusillanimous miscreant; show me to this titled monster; and pressing forward, instantly reached the apartment where sat the lawless peer, accompanied by the vile agent of prostitution. At sight of Aubery he arose from his seat, with rage and indignation flashing from his eyes, demanded his name and business. "The name I bear, my lord," replied our hero, "stands registered in my country's annals; renowned for honorable achievements; for deeds of valour and intrepidity: in private life, the name of Aubery stands yet unsullied, and in me

you behold, my lord, a branch of that family, who dauntless boasts in the proud chance allotted him by fate to snatch from infamy a lovely unprotected female. Should your lordship feel inclined to enter upon a further elucidation of circumstances, you will find me at my father's, the seat of Sir Edward Aubery, whither I am going to proceed; and with the highest satisfaction at your lordship's disappointment, I am your very obedient humble servant." Our hero now abruptly left the astonished peer, without affording him the least opportunity of justifying the baseness of his conduct; and with the sweet reflection of having stood forth the champion of *insulted virtue and of injured innocence*. He quitted the habitation where, during the space of

one week, he had felt most accutely the mingled emotions of pleasure and of pain. As stepping into the chaise, he murmured to himself, "lovely Sabina, *farewel: that word* still vibrates on my ear, and thrills through every tender fibre of my heart. Is this imperious love? or is it the offspring of pity? perhaps 'tis both: well, it matters not; the fond remembrance of her beautiful form, her spotless virtues, I will cherish in my bosom to the latest period of my life." As we have now nearly arrived with Captain Aubery to his paternal roof, we shall, for a short time, take our leave of him, and follow our heroine into Yorkshire.

It was on the evening of the third day, accompanied by Mrs. Delrymple, she arrived at Ealand, and having or-



dered the post-boy to stop at the village, Sabina alighted; Mrs. Delrymple having previously determined to proceed by herself to the house, in order to pave the way for Sabina's reception. She was met on her entrance by the sister of Mrs. Melford, whom she had the pleasure to learn was still living, though in eminent danger. The above lady expressed the utmost surprise that Sabina had so long been silent in her duty, at a period so awful, which threatened hourly the death of an affectionate and only surviving parent. Mrs. Delrymple, anxious to avoid all *eclaircissement*, pleaded the serious indisposition of Sabina as the sole cause of her apparent neglect; observing also, that it was in consequence of her alarming state of health, that she had accompanied



her the whole of the journey. Miss Atkinson, the sister of Mrs. Melford, expressed her grateful thanks to Mrs. Delrymple, for the friendly interest she had taken in behalf of her neice. The chaise was now dispatched back to the village, which shortly returned with the anxious trembling girl, who was in an instant at the bed-side of her afflicted mother. Mrs. Melford had, prior to her daughter's arrival, been pronounced by the faculty past recovery. But the consolation she derived from her presence, 'tis more than probable, aided the vital powers, and retarded the period of her dissolution. Reason maintained its empire to the last; and a few hours previous to the final change, she begged that Mr. Edwards might be sent for; a gentleman

who had been appointed by Mr. Melford executor and guardian to his family. At his approach, every one present withdrew; when, with a sweet composure, the true index of a virtuous life, Mrs. Melford addressed him as follows: “I think, my good sir, it is nearly four years since the great and wise disposer of all human events was pleased to snatch from me my first and most invaluable blessing; and is now, in pity to my sufferings, about calling me to join a beloved husband, in the mansions of eternal rest. To his divine protection I humbly submit my dear orphans, and under the immediate inspection of so tender a guardian, I resign this mortal state supremely happy. My eldest daughter, Mr. Edwards, will experience a mother’s care in my

worthy friend Mrs. Drummond. Eliza, after my decease, is to accompany my sister, and to continue under her protection. My three younger girls, I could wish should be kept at school, until Sabina has attained a proper age to engage in business, and when established, to be placed with her. To your affectionate regard I bequeath my son; he emulates his father's virtues; and, with such a monitor as you, sir, he can never err. Having now arranged my worldly concerns, I fain would see my children once again; the hour of dissolution is drawing near; farewell, my best friend, farewell." Mr. Edwards, unable to reply, arose from his seat; the tear of sympathy and regret rolled down his venerable cheek, as, with hasty step, he paced the

chamber, for some minutes: then turning to take a long and last adieu of the patient saint, perceiving she had fallen into a sweet slumber, he quitted the room. The family now re-entered the apartment; Mrs. Melford still slept; whilst the weeping eyes of her affectionate offspring were watching each successive breath she drew; till at length she awoke, gazed upon her children, fetched a deep groan, and sunk into a calm and eternal repose.

Here, reader, we shall drop the curtain. Mortality, familiarized to death, can easily participate in the melancholy scene. It is a debt we must all pay. The ruthless monster is no respecter of persons, shews no compunction; not even in the chamber of the beautiful bride, the enraptured bridegroom,

whose torch is kindled at the purest flame; but stalks forth, regardless of the fond union, and all their promised sweets are changed to bitterness. The tender parent too.—How oft, whilst gazing on the rosy smiling cherub, darling of all their joys, the grim tyrant, with unerring hand, levels his dart, and strikes at the blossom of their rising hopes. Thus the portrait of temporal felicity is displayed, and clearly informs all human nature, that earthly bliss is ultimately but a visionary charm. But to return.—

The three elder children had reached an age capable of feeling the magnitude of their loss, for which they were almost inconsolable. Excessive grief appeared indeed to pervade every bosom; but time, which conquers all affliction,



abated, by degrees, the keen pangs of sorrow. In about a fortnight after the funeral of Mrs. Melford, Mrs. Delrymple informed Mr. Edwards, that under her protection Sabina should be reconducted to London; and preparations were accordingly made for their departure. The allotted period of her apprenticeship was unexpired, and to fulfil it she felt was her duty; she therefore assumed a reconciliation to the task, which her timid heart secretly denied. Retrospection of past sufferings excited terrors in her mind, and she briefly unburthened her heart to her amiable friend, Mrs. Delrymple; who, by pathetic reasoning, strove to remove the prejudice she had imbibed, and to meliorate the corroding pangs which rankled in her bosom. “You



must not indeed, my dear," said Mrs. Delrymple, "cherish so troublesome an inmate as reflection; though I am sensible, that where virtue is the governing principle of the heart, it naturally revolts, even at the shadow of vice: yet, Sabina, remember, and I am persuaded you will admire the wisdom of providence: have you not been plucked from the brink of an awful precipice? such a miraculous event ought to be deeply impressed on your mind, and inform you, that under the most trying vicissitudes, you have been the peculiar care of omnipotence: are you not returning to a situation, chosen for you by a fond indulgent mother? who, even in the pangs of death, evinced a peaceful serenity in the consolatory idea, that you were under the

protection of a beloved friend, in whose affectionate bosom you would find a secondary parent. Come, come, Miss Melford, dry up those tears; immoderate grief will disqualify you for the important station to which you are called by the ties of nature; though each drop you shed, is a tribute due to the memory of departed friends. You, my Sabina, are the eldest of an orphan family, and must look forward to that period, when your junior sisters are to consider you as their monitor and guide: the sacred trust will be assigned to you. A few years experience will qualify you for a regular establishment; and under the influence of those virtues you inherit from your worthy parents, success will accompany your pursuits through life; therefore I entreat you, Sabina, to

chase from your remembrance, all misfortunes past.

“ I shall, madam,” rejoined Sabina, weeping on the bosom of her friend; “ pardon this weakness,” she continued; “ the irreparable loss I have sustained, united to the corroding pangs of fraternal love; and my trembling fears, at again visiting the metropolis, altogether, hangs about my heart. The thought of parting from my dear sisters, of quitting, perhaps for ever, this beloved mansion, to which I am bound by all the fond ties of duty and affection, although bereft of my parental blessing.”

Here the powers of articulation failed; the afflicted girl, with tears of filial sorrow, wrung the hand of her

friend, and retired to her sleepless couch.

The following day Mrs. Delrymple proposed commencing her journey, when our heroine was destined to part from all she held most dear; yet it was some alleviation of her grief, that her amiable friend evinced an increase of sympathy for her sufferings; *this* it was, which in some degree reconciled Sabina to her fate, of leaving the peaceful shades of her nativity, again to embark on that perilous ocean where, so late, her hopes of happiness had nearly foundered.

Now the moment was at hand, in which this orphan family were, for a time, to separate. The senior party, who witnessed their pathetic struggles,

could not restrain the tear of sympathy. Mr. Edwards, who was far advanced in years, sobbed aloud, whilst the big drop glistened in his eye, and spake more eloquently the language of the heart, than volumes could pourtray. "Madam," said he, addressing himself to Mrs. Delrymple, "the generous part you have taken in our distresses, entails upon me a debt of gratitude I never can discharge; accept, however, my best thanks and sincere wishes for a continuance of your health and felicity." Then turning to Sabina, "protecting angels guard thy innocence, my good girl." The chaise drove up to the door, a reciprocal adieu closed the affecting scene, and the carriage, in a few moments, was out of sight. Oh, how instinctively do the affections ope-

rate on the human heart; how fondly call forth the powers of nature, and dispose the sympathising breast to bestow the soothing balm of tenderness and compassion; ingrafting in the unviated mind, *that* love and esteem so essentially and constitutionally due to nature and consanguinity.

Nothing material occurred during the journey; but, on the evening of the second day, they arrived safe in Portland - street. Mrs. Drummond received them with the highest satisfaction; endeavouring, at the same time, to conceal the emotions of pity struggling within, excited by the presence of Sabina; for she had previously been informed of Mrs. Melford's death, and felt, most tenderly, for the sufferings of her orphan daughter. Our



lovely heroine was now once more re-instated in her profession, under that roof which had yielded her the peaceful fruits of happiness, in the chearful society of her associates: but, alas, that peace was fled; she felt, in her bosom, an aching void, and a settled melancholy seemed to prey upon her spirits. Mrs. Drummond perceived the conflict with infinite concern, and strove, by mild and gentle reasoning, to dissipate the gloom: and, as we observed in a foregoing page, the most poignant sensations of misery are conquered by time; it is a balsam for every wound, though accomplished by slow gradations.

On Mrs. Delrymple's arrival at her house, she was informed that Captain Aubery had left his card, and would call

again the next morning. According to his promise, the servant announced his arrival; after many tender enquiries of Sabina, (too pointed for Mrs. Delrymple to misconstrue) he related the circumstance of having received his sailing orders, and doubted whether he should have the felicity of seeing Miss Melford before he embarked for the West Indies, naturally concluding that she was then in Yorkshire, and Mrs. Delrymple judged it most prudent he should remain ignorant of Sabina's address. "But," continued Aubery, "it would afford me infinite pleasure, madam, were I assured that Miss Melford would allow me a place in her remembrance; would it appear an insult to her sorrows, were I to indulge the propensity I feel of

troubling her with a few lines ?”—“ Believe me, sir, she is possessed of too much good sense,” replied Mrs. Delrymple, “ to mistake sympathy for impertinence.”—“ No, sir, she is emphatically a child of nature : her heart is the seat of gratitude, and of every virtue that can dignify a female, and justly render her the idol of all who know her.”

“ They do, indeed, madam,” said Aubery, “ Angelic lovely girl ! I hope,” added he, with a sigh, “ that I have not seen her for the last time.”—“ Probably not, sir,” returned Mrs. D——, with a smile. “ She will shortly be in London for a continuance. Notwithstanding, should you wish, sir, to address Miss Melford, the letter shall be forwarded to her with a packet I am

myself going to send.”—“ I thank you, madam,” rejoined Aubery ; “ and, as I am only bound to convoy a fleet of merchantmen, I take my leave, under the animating persuasion, that, in a short time, I shall have the honor of again paying you my respects.” He now took his leave, and, in the course of that day, sent a letter for Sabina. Mrs. Delrymple, who felt an interest in every thing which concerned our heroine, secretly enjoyed the idea that she had captivated the heart of Aubery ; but this is not a time (thought she) to enter upon a subject so foreign to her present feelings ; and, placing the letter in her escritoir, determined to wait the return of her former spirits ; and a few weeks subsequent to Captain Aubery’s departure, a favorable oppor-

tunity occurred, when Mrs. Delrymple faithfully discharged her trust, by presenting Sabina with the tender epistle. Its contents, however, were buried in oblivion, as she forbore expatiating with Sabina on the subject.—Nothing of any moment occurred from this period worthy of observation, until the term of Miss Melford's apprenticeship was expired, when, by the particular request of Mrs. Delrymple, she became an inmate in her family, where she had resided but a short time before Mrs. Drummond was taken suddenly ill, and begged that Miss Melford might be sent for: she immediately obeyed the summons. The good woman took her hand, and thus addressed her: "My dear Sabina, I have a proposal to make, which, if it accords with your senti-

ments, will, I trust, become a genteel establishment for you and your sisters. I am far advanced you know in life, and have accumulated a sufficiency to supply all my wants during the evening of my days. My health is at best but precarious ; and, should I recover, have serious thoughts of retiring to my native place ; consequently I shall relinquish business. I have no relations who have the slightest claim upon my generosity. I shall therefore make it over to you, with such part of my household furniture as you will find necessary on entering the world in such a respectable profession"—she paused ; " My best friend," Sabina was proceeding.—" Stop," interrupted Mrs. Drummond ; " I have not yet concluded, my dear. I had a great esteem for your worthy parents :



your amiable mother was dear to me from her infancy; she was an orphan like yourself; and it gives me a singular degree of pleasure to perceive that you emulate her virtues. Possessing those hereditary principles, those genuine notions of honor, your every pursuit through life, I doubt not, will be crowned with success."

"My gratitude, madam," replied Sabina, "is all I have to offer in return for your generous friendship; and I am doubly sensible of the obligation under my present circumstances; for though my dear Mrs. Delrymple is beneficence itself, tender and affectionate to me in the extreme, yet, knowing that my situation with her affords me but a temporary asylum, I frequently feel a secret pang at the idea of a precarious futurity.

My dear sisters too—they have occupied much of my thoughts ! but your liberal and generous offer, madam, realizes the hope which I long have fondly cherished. My much regretted mother would often say to me, ‘ When you, my dear Sabina, are perfectly mistress of a genteel profession, the terrors of death will be vanquished ; I shall then meet my end with resignation, for I know you will act a parent’s part to your orphan sisters.’ Judge then, my dear friend, with what eager delight I accept the proffered blessing, to realize with such flattering prospects the darling wish of a fond mother’s heart.”

“ A heart so tempered with genuine sensibility, so fraught with filial piety as yours,” said Mrs. Drummond, “ has an universal claim upon every noble and

generous mind. Yes, my good girl; the opinion I ever entertained of your merit is increased, and with it my zeal to serve you. I therefore advise you, Sabina, to write immediately to your guardian, and consult with Mrs. Delrymple. Whenever you feel inclined to embrace the offer I have made you, my arms shall be open to receive you. If it please the Almighty to spare my life, I will continue for a twelvemonth with you; at which period, I trust, you will be sufficiently initiated in the business to dispense with my instructions: your two eldest sisters by that time will have finished their education; they will become useful in the profession, and increase your happiness."

"My dear madam," replied Sabina, "the enchanting plan of felicity which

you have marked out for me, almost makes me forget my recent sorrows; but I must entreat you, my dear friend, to pay attention to your health. I will not be long absent. Mrs. Delrymple I am convinced will sanction every proposal which tends to my future welfare. Adieu my best, my dearest friend, heaven I hope will soon enable you to recover the effects of your indisposition."

On Sabina's return to Queen-square, she was presented with a letter from Captain Aubery, dated from Plymouth. Mrs. Delrymple, in a strain of vivacity, could not forbear rallying her, observing, as she took the letter, a modest blush to suffice her lovely cheeks.—  
"Don't be ashamed, my love, this is not the first epistle from the same quar-

ter, *you know*; but you kept the contents of the former to yourself. You must allow *me* to participate in this, my love"—“Most willingly, my dear madam,” answered Sabina; “the *first*, I assure you, did not contain more than half a dozen lines, which consisted of the most friendly enquiries after my health.”—“Well, my dear,” resumed Mrs. D——, “Are you not impatient to know what his enquiries are in the present letter. I suspect they are not altogether unconnected with the subject—His *own* health.” Sabina, while breaking the seal, with great simplicity, said, “Do you suspect that Captain Aubery is ill, madam?”—“If he is, my love,” replied Mrs. D——, “his malady is a natural one. Come, read your letter, child, and if I predict

aright, depend upon it the poor dear gentleman has appointed *you* his physician." Sabina read the letter, blushed, and gave it to her friend, who perused it, and smiled; then taking the hand of Sabina, affectionately said, "I congratulate you, my dear girl; few there are, I believe, but would be proud to own the impression which you have assuredly made on the heart of that amiable young man. I could have apprized you of Captain Aubery's sentiments long since; but I conceived him perfectly competent to tell his own story. He has told it now in very plain English, and leaves you sole arbitress of his future destiny."—"I can never doubt, madam, Captain Aubery's sincerity, or the honor of his intentions," returned Sabina; "but, were I to encourage any idea of that gen-



tleman beyond what gratitude and esteem might sanction, I should reproach myself for my presumption. The great disparity between *Sabina Melford* and *Captain Aubery*, is an unsuperable bar to *their* union. I shall ever hold him in the highest estimation as a noble generous friend. Farther ideas I can never cherish, at least not under my present circumstances; and I am persuaded, my dear madam, that you will applaud my resolution, when I relate to you the conversation I have had this morning with my dear friend Mrs. Drummond.”—“She is, indeed, a worthy woman, Sabina,” said Mrs. Delrymple, “and she regards you with the affection of a parent. I will attend to every thing you have to tell me after dinner; but, at present, I have some

few observations to make on the subject in question. You must know, my dear, that since Captain Aubery honored me with a visit, I have made it my business to enquire some particulars relative to his origin and character, and have learnt that he is the only son of a wealthy baronet, is possessed of every virtue and qualification that can adorn and do honor to man; therefore you may perceive it is not a mean or contemptible conquest you have made; and, though *your* diffidence will not allow you to encourage the addresses of a man who ranks in life so much above you, yet remember, that love is an indiscriminate passion; and that it often unites the courtier with the peasant. Distinctions of rank or fortune are seldom found to influence the mind, when the

heart becomes truly susceptible of virtuous love ; but I will urge you no further on the subject at present. Answer your letter as gratitude and politeness dictates ; and though you should say nothing to feed the lambent flame, pity and generosity, I trust, will deter you from expressing such sentiments as might tend to extinguish the glowing embers of an infant, a tender, and apparently most honorable passion." Dinner being announced, the conversation ended ; and, in the evening, as was proposed, Sabina repeated all that had passed between her and Mrs. Drummond. Mrs. Delrymple received the information with a mixture of pleasure and regret. She was a very domestic woman, and had little intercourse with the fashionable world. Sabina was a companion perfectly congenial to her

wishes in the sedentary stile she lived in ; but she clearly saw the advantages which would accrue to an orphan family, from her embracing the liberal proposals made her. She therefore abandoned every selfish desire to their more immediate interests. Mrs. Drummond's health continued fluctuating, and it was considered expedient that Sabina should lose no time in accepting her generous offer. She accordingly returned to her profession. Mrs. Drummond had carefully provided against the worst that might befall her, by making her *Will* in favor of Miss Melford, wherein she had bequeathed her the greatest part of her household furniture, and put her in full possession of the business. In the course of a few months subsequent to this period, Mrs. Del-

rymple found herself under the necessity of making a journey to Scotland, in order to transact some important business. Mrs. Drummond was, at the same time, preparing to visit the latter country likewise, and therefore gladly embraced the opportunity of accompanying her friend. Sabina now saw with inexpressible concern, that a few days would separate her from her worthy friends. She wrote to her guardian, requesting that one of her sisters might join her as soon as possible ; but the return of post brought her the melancholy tidings that her sisters were all seized with a scarlet fever, and Mary, which was the eldest, in imminent danger. This sad intelligence caused her doubly to regret the loss of her worthy patronesses. Her timid heart sunk

with fearful apprehensions, when she reflected on her youth and inexperience, and the danger of being thus left without a friend or monitor, to whose candor or wisdom she could appeal in matters above her own judgment. Mrs. Drummond perceived, with concern, a natural diffidence and meekness of temper in Sabina, which she feared might subject her to impositions in her intercourse with the world; but for every thing which related to the propriety of her personal conduct, she entertained *no* fears. It is probable that Mrs. Drummond's attachment to Sabina would have induced her to continue a considerable time longer in town; but feeling a gradual decay of nature, she became impatient to visit the place of her birth; and, after many tender and



affectionate admonitions, she bade our heroine adieu, with a satisfaction only known to those who can say, with a celebrated author, “That next to being happy ourselves, is the pleasure of making others so.”

A few weeks subsequent to the departure of the two ladies, Sabina received a letter from Captain Aubery, dated from the island of Barbadoes: she hastily broke the seal, and read as follows:—

“If the name of Edward Aubery was ever considered worthy a place in Miss Melford’s memory, he fears by this time his apparent neglect has blotted it out for ever. Yet, amiable, beloved Sabina, he fain would cherish the fond hope that neither time nor absence has wholly obliterated his remembrance.

For oh, his happiness is centered in the pleasing anticipation of again beholding you, all lovely as you are : Miss Melford pleads disparity of situation—can wealth dignify the soul? Can poverty diminish the intrinsic virtues that adorn the mind?—These are the inestimable gems that add lustre to the humblest sphere. These were what first rendered you dear, and must ever continue to render you dear to my heart. Think not, therefore, my adored Sabina! Oh think not so poorly of yourself! Wound not my faithful heart by a mistaken diffidence; but permit me to hope for the attainment of that felicity to which I aspire; a felicity which vulgar souls are incapable of feeling.—Oft I view, with heartfelt regret, the immensity of the liquid space which divides me from my

native land, from all I hold most dear. How would the correspondence of my Sabina dispel the gloomy presages that embitter the tedious hours of absence! Pity, I well know, is the inmate of thy gentle bosom! Oh let *that* dictate a cheering line of encouragement! At least, let me entertain the hope you have not totally forgotten

*Barbadoes,*  
Oct. 10, 1753.

AUBERY."

The mind of Sabina was agitated by various sensations; and, could Aubery have viewed her countenance at that moment, he might have read the secret feelings of her heart; for it was now that she felt the tender passion he had inspired. She again perused the letter: it spoke the soft language of love; it

breathed sincerity, honour, and esteem. A tear appeared to have fallen upon the paper, in which Aubery lamented the immensity of seas that rolled between them; and it excited a correspondent tear of sympathy in the eye of Sabina. She heaved a sigh, and murmured to herself. “Generous young man!”—“Yes, Aubery, from this moment will I treasure up thy noble image in my bosom; there shall it reign unrivalled; nor shall distance, place, or time, ever chace from my heart, or destroy the remembrance of thy transcendent virtues.”

As Sabina was thus dwelling on the pleasing theme which now engrossed her attention, her meditations were suddenly disturbed by a carriage driving up to the door. As it was within a few

weeks of her majesty's birth-day, a lady had called to bespeak a dress for the occasion. Sabina had never seen this lady before; but was informed that Mrs. Cookson, one of her employers, had recommended her. When the lady had given instructions for her dress, she presented Sabina with her card, and took her leave. "Wentworth," exclaimed Sabina, in astonishment at reading the superscription on the card: "Good heaven! The name of Wentworth brings to my recollection the sad remembrance of happier days. Dear, dear name, it is engraven on my heart; but alas, I have no interest in it now, except to please in my profession the lady who bears it." Then, with a sigh, seating herself at the window, a train of thoughts rushed on her mind;

a sort of melancholy stole over her, and presented the sad retrospect of past times; nor was it till some time had elapsed, and the idea of Aubery had dissipated the gloom, that she was enabled to rise.

We shall not, however, intrude upon the patience of our readers in this part, by dwelling on the subject of her contemplation, but proceed to the principal events of our heroine's life. Sabina was at this time immersed in business; and, expecting every day the arrival of her sister Mary, the days passed on in placid content; but, alas, this calm was transient: A melancholy accident befel her, which, for some time, suspended all her prospects of happiness, and reduced her to a state of misery and despair. She had been sent for one even-



ing to wait upon a lady in Portland-place, who detained her a considerable time longer than she expected, and was returning home between nine and ten o'clock, when, approaching the street in which she lived, she was alarmed by a cry of fire: she hastened on, anxious to escape the crowd that was assembling, when, in a few moments, she was shocked with the sight of her own house in flames. In less than two hours it was reduced to ashes.—Thus she became in an instant a miserable houseless wanderer, destitute even of the common necessities of life: her whole property was consumed; her servants and workwomen were dispersed, unable to find them; and, in a state easier to be conceived than described, she was obliged to take refuge in the house of a

neighbour, who commiserated her unhappy situation, and very humanely assured her that an apartment should be at her service, until she could acquaint her friends of her misfortune. It was, indeed, next to impossible but that the most obdurate heart must, in some degree, sympathize with the fair sufferer. Several days elapsed before her spirits were sufficiently recovered from the shock they had sustained, to adopt any plan for the future. The first thing that occurred to her distracted imagination was to write to her guardian ; for she reflected how unavailing it would be, at that moment, to disclose her misfortunes to her female friends then in Scotland, as such an event could not fail of making them wretched in the extreme, without yielding her (the dis-

tance was so great) any immediate relief; and after having written to her guardian a faithful statement of every circumstance, and requesting a speedy remittance, she assumed all the courage and fortitude she was mistress of, and waited upon such of her employers whose clothes had been destroyed in the conflagration. It was some alleviation of her distresses, to find in every bosom a tender commiseration for her calamity. A subscription was immediately raised by several ladies of distinction; and, in the course of a week, she engaged genteel apartments, made a handsome acknowledgment to the good people who had afforded her an asylum in her affliction, and took possession of her new abode, though not under the most happy impression, every

one about her being strangers, for she had not as yet been able to gain any information of her servant or work-women ; that circumstance preyed also much on her mind and spirits.—However, her own misfortunes did not create despondency, but rather stimulated in her breast a zeal to recommence her industrious pursuits, to facilitate which she became doubly indefatigable in her profession. She had in her letter to her guardian begged that her sister would hasten to her as soon as possible ; and the return of post brought her an answer from Mr. Edwards, in which he assured her, that, in the space of three weeks, he should be himself in London, accompanied by her sisters Mary and Eliza ; and, at the same time, advised Sabina to continue

with the friendly people in whose house she had taken refuge, to board with them until he should arrive, when a proper situation should then be fixed upon for her re-commencement in business: he also expressed his great grief and concern for the unfortunate occurrence—but intreated her to keep up her spirits, assuring her that nothing should be wanting which the sincerest friendship could suggest to place her again in a situation equally comfortable. Sabina felt the force of this advice, from a thorough conviction that Mr. Edwards judged it highly improper for so young a woman to enter upon any new plan or speculation without the opinion of her friends. But how could she now retract? She had taken possession of her lodging upwards of a week: she



had also received liberal donations from many of her employers, and as much business crowding in upon her as she was enabled to engage in. She therefore determined to address her guardian, and plead that the step she had unadvisedly taken, prudence had dictated to *her*, and that it wore the most flattering appearance of success. With the approval of her own conscience, in having acted consonant with *her* ideas of propriety, she answered the letter, and dispatched it by return of post.

But fate had pre-determined ever to crush the rising hopes of the unfortunate Sabina. One evening, having a dress to take home, she fastened her doors; requested the landlady would take any message that might be sent in her absence, as she was going into the



city: from whence, having transacted her business, she returned home. On entering her apartment, she was startled at perceiving the window of her bed-chamber thrown open; but how much greater was her consternation upon casting her eyes around the rooms, to find them stripped of every article of wearing apparel, as well as a quantity of plate belonging to the people of the house, which had been deposited in a closet, where, they informed her, they always kept it for safety. She instantly flew down stairs, almost frantic, and acquainted the mistress of the house, that thieves, in her absence, had got in at the window, and plundered the apartments of every thing. "Is my plate gone?" demanded she. Sabina burst into tears. "It is

indeed, madam," she replied. "Oh, what shall I do? several dresses belonging to my best friends; my own apparel too; all, all, are gone. Oh, when shall I find a period to my misfortunes?"

The unfeeling monster darted at her a look, which penetrated her very soul. "This comes of my taking folks into my house without a character," said she; "but I shall expect, madam, that you will make good my loss; you know the property was entrusted to your care." She then flounced out of the room, leaving the astonished Sabina in a state of inexpressible horror. Language is inadequate to pourtray the poignant sensations that wrung the heart of the afflicted girl. She returned to her miserable apartment, which now presented nothing but a scene of terror and

desolation: driven almost to frenzy, she threw herself on the bed. "Almighty powers!" she exclaimed, "direct me how to act; extricate me from this labyrinth of woe into which I am plunged. O, ye sainted spirits of my dear departed parents, could ye, for a moment, view the miseries of your wretched child, how would it afflict ye in the mansions of the blest. Cruel misfortune; thy keen arrows surely are pointed against my happiness. Oh, why does trouble thus closely pursue me through every avenue of life. In this deplorable state of mind, she passed a sleepless night, and arose in the morning to witness a scene altogether as new as it was terrific. She had just sat down, wrapped in sad reflection on the fatal occurrences of the preced-

ing evening, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and two ill-looking fellows rushed into the room; she started from her seat, and demanded their business: one of them drew a paper from his pocket, answering, they had a writ against her. Sabina at first did not comprehend their meaning, until they, observing her confusion, added, “ Why, madam, Mrs. Clark, your landlady, says you have robbed your lodgings, which, by the laws of this country, is deemed felony; but she has humanely, in consideration of your youth, only made a debt of it; so you must pay forty pounds, procure bail, or go to prison: you have your choice.”

Sabina became motionless; she sunk into a chair, and, for some minutes, remained in a state of insensibility.

The men were alarmed, and rang the bell, but no one approached: when the injured girl, reviving, exclaimed, "Cruel ungenerous woman, she knows that I am *not* the guilty wretch you insinuate; I have, myself, been robbed, plundered of all I possessed, except a little money which I locked up in this bureau. She flew to it, in order to discharge the debt, illegal as it was; but, alas, all was gone. For she had, the night before, owing to the dread confusion she suffered for the loss of all her other property, omitted investigating her apartments further than for those articles which, on her entrance, she saw were missing. She instantly uttered a piercing shriek, and fell upon the floor. The men now felt themselves in a very awkward predicament, and began to

suspect that their prisoner was the victim of a base conspiracy. They placed her in a chair: her fleeting senses, in a few minutes, returned; when she gazed at them with a wildness in her eyes which seriously alarmed them: the power of utterance seemed to have forsaken her. One of the men addressed her in a tone of voice, in some measure, calculated to soothe her sorrows; "Come, madam," said he, "don't give yourself up to despair; if *you* are the injured person, the laws are open to redress your wrongs; Mrs. Clarke has told her story, and you will be allowed the same privilege to tell yours: but you must now accompany me, where you will shortly have an opportunity of proving your innocence, and of obtaining justice also." "Yes, sir," replied



Sabina, with a composure that astonished them; "I shall attend you, gentlemen: my miseries are now complete!"——A coach was sent for, in which, by the officers, she was conducted to prison. The letter that Sabina had received from Mr. Edwards the day previous to this misfortune, contained a remittance of fifty pounds; she had placed it in this bureau untouched; but that, with every other article of value she was plundered of, reduced her to a situation wretched in the extreme. When they alighted at the prison doors, the sight of such a place impressed Sabina's mind with horrors almost insupportable: conscious innocence, alone, strengthened and inspired her with patience and fortitude to bear up under the shock of adversity,

under the pressure of her accumulated woes. On entering the dismal mansion of misery, she cast her eyes around, and beheld several fellow-sufferers of her own sex, whose wretched appearance bespoke extreme poverty. Her own sorrows became less poignant, and compassion for those of others, took its turn in her sympathetic bosom. Her attention was particularly attracted by a poor young creature, who, in one corner of the room, sat upon a miserable bed, with a book in her hand; her emaciated frame was but barely covered with a tattered garment: in short, she exhibited a melancholy picture of despair.

Sabina felt an interest in the apparent sufferings of this poor girl, and secretly wished to know what wayward

fate had reduced her to such a state of complicated misery.

Sabina had, upon her entrance to the prison, enquired for the keeper; but was informed that she could not see him before the evening, or the following day: she therefore strove to compose her mind, and purposed writing to some of her most confidential friends a circumstantial account of her unhappy situation. She accordingly addressed herself to this poor girl, and begged she would instruct her by what means she could procure pen, ink, and paper.

“I have some, at your service, madam,” she replied: “the only consolation left me, under heaven, is to commit to paper, each succeeding day, the sad events of my woe-fraught life. Sixteen months,” continued she, “have

I lingered out a painful existence in this dreary prison; but I feel the moment fast approaching which will separate me from misery for ever. Should ever my hapless tale be told in after-times, a tear of pity may, perhaps, be shed for injured innocence. My unmerited persecution will soon find a termination in the silent grave."

The tears of sympathy glistened in the eyes of Sabina. "Have you no friends?" said she, "you appear to be very young."

"No friend on earth," replied she, "that I know of, madam. Sorrow was entailed upon me at my birth; I have been the victim of cruelty and oppression from my infancy. What little I know of my origin, I have committed to paper; as also every event of

my unhappy life. Your stay in this place, madam, I hope will be but of a short duration. If agreeable," continued she, "I will submit to your perusal my unfortunate narrative; and, should the melancholy recital meet with your commiseration, I have no doubt but a moment may arrive, when you, blest with the smiles of fortune, will look back on the suffering Fanny, should cruel fate prolong an existence which every hour becomes less supportable."

Sabina's compassionate bosom heaved with stifled sighs, and the tears streamed down her lovely cheeks. Tenderly taking the poor unhappy Fanny by the hand, with a voice scarcely articulate, she assured her of her friendship. "Should it ever be in my power," added she, "poor injured suffer, to al-



leviate thy sorrows, and release thee from the horrors of this wretched place, I shall bless the misfortune that made me an inmate of this mansion of misery."

Fanny now presented Sabina with the manuscript, which the latter put in her pocket. They passed the day in reciprocal confidence, and mutual sympathy. The evening was fast approaching, and Sabina looked forward with anxious hopes to an interview with the keeper of the prison. She had dispatched a letter to an old faithful domestic of Mrs. Delrymple's; as also one to a particular friend of that lady, stating her deplorable situation.

At length she was informed that the keeper had returned, and desired to know what might be her business with



him. "My business," said she to the messenger, "I wish to communicate in person, if he will be so good as to grant me an interview."—"O, certainly," replied the man; "please to follow me."

She was conducted to an outer apartment, and waited but a few minutes ere the keeper entered. Sabina's interesting countenance, her elegant figure, and modest deportment, so much astonished him, that he stood for some time gazing upon her in silent admiration. "Madam," said he, with diffidence, "are you the *prisoner* who, I have been informed, wished to speak with me?"—"I am, sir," replied she; "I have no friends in London to whom I can appeal to investigate my wrongs: my case is as extraordinary as it is cruel

and unjust. With your permission, sir, I will relate the circumstance.”—“Proceed, madam,” said the keeper. Sabina then recited every particular of her recent misfortune. “I have written to the lady,” continued she, “at whose house I was engaged when my apartments were plundered.”—“The lady’s name, if you please?” asked the keeper.—“Cookson, sir,” replied she.—“You have done wisely in writing her an account of your calamity,” said the keeper. Mr. Cookson is one of the sheriffs for the county. I have attentively listened to your narrative; and I clearly perceive the whole of this villainous plot. A little patience, my dear,” continued he, “and you will triumph over your accusers; your innocence will be manifested, and the guilty

persons be brought to justice. Therefore, divest yourself of every idea that you are a prisoner ; and I will order an apartment to be made ready in my house for your accommodation. For the present I will take my leave under the flattering persuasion that the morning will procure you both justice and your liberty."

Sabina was now left to her own reflections. She anticipated the result of the succeeding day with a degree of pleasure, which, but a few hours before, she was an utter stranger to ; and, as it occurred to her, that the evening would appear tedious and irksome unaccompanied, she would embrace the opportunity of perusing the manuscript given her by the unfortunate Fanny. She accordingly drew it from her pocket, and read as follows :

*Fanny's Narrative.*

“ I have been induced to believe that I am a native of Holland; but from what part of it, or from whom I derive my origin, I am totally ignorant. All that I could ever learn was, that I am the offspring of a secret amour, and that my mother breathed her last at my birth. That I was placed by my illegitimate father in the hands of an English-woman is certain, who, no doubt, recompensed her for receiving me, as he chose to adopt that mode of banishing, for ever, his infant daughter.

“ During my infantine state, I was naturally led to look up to this woman as my real parent; and under that persuasion I continued, until reason began

to dawn, and nature act her part, by animating it with discriminating powers. Then it was that I discovered and became sensible of my wretched situation. This cruel woman, before I had reached my ninth year, would often wound my ears with gross epithets, such as *Dutch bastard!* and a variety of harsh invectives, sufficiently explicit to convince me, that she was *not* my mother. She sent me to school, it is true; but not with an intention to improve my young mind, but merely to get me out of the way.

“ Ere I had obtained my tenth year, she placed me in servitude, as a parish apprentice, for the term of five years. My poor little heart bounded with joy at the approaching change; for the cruel behaviour of this unfeeling wo-



man taught me to believe, that to part from her, was to separate me from misery. But alas ! it was a

“ Visionary hope !

“ The common lot of a friendless orphan assailed me with unabating fury. Wretchedness and sorrow multiplied with my years. The people with whom I lived kept a little green-shop, situated in a part of Westminster. Amidst the lowest class of the community, here, for two years, I suffered every hardship which barbarity could suggest. I was frequently beaten in the most shocking manner, and almost famished : hunger and cruelty induced me to meditate my escape, determined to throw myself upon the mercy of her whom I had



once called by the tender name of mother. One morning, while my inhuman mistress was gone to market, I set out, never stopping till I reached the Seven Dials, where my nurse resided when last I saw her.—But, alas! she had quitted her house, and every enquiry after her proved abortive. Thus forlorn, deplorable, and friendless, I wandered from street to street, and was resolved to ask charity, rather than return to that home from which I had escaped. Fatigued and hungry, I strolled into St. James's Park; and, sitting down upon one of the seats in the Mall, I burst into tears. Wearied nature at length sunk into repose; and sleep, for a short time, absorbed the cruel anguish which tortured my imagination.

“I was suddenly awakened by a female voice, which, in a tone of compassion, said, ‘My good girl, why do you sit here to sleep? You had better go home.’ I naturally replied, that I had no home to go to. Further interrogations induced me to relate my sad story; and, in the simplicity of my heart, I told her all that I knew of myself.—‘Poor girl!’ said she, ‘I think I can do something for you. At all events follow me.’—The powerful cravings of nature prompted me to obey her; for I had not tasted any kind of sustenance that day. I followed my conductress to a house in the vicinity of Pall Mall: she took me to the kitchen, where she left me to satisfy extreme hunger. I was then conducted to an elegant apartment, where sat a lady, whose appear-

ance bespoke her to be the mistress of this splendid mansion. ‘Come hither, child,’ said she, rather haughtily; ‘Thou art certainly a poor little ragged object; but if I was sure that you would be a good girl, humanity might tempt me to compassionate your situation; for I understand that you are without friends, or any home to fly to.’ A tear of gratitude instantly vouched for the truth of what I had related. ‘Yes, indeed, ma’am,’ I replied; ‘I will be a good girl, and make it my study to please you.’—‘How old are you?’ demanded she; ‘and what is your name?’—‘I am just turned of twelve, I believe, ma’am,’ answered I; ‘and my name is Fanny.’—‘You must be more than twelve, child,’ said she, ‘or you are very tall, and well grown,

for that age. However, I will send you to a boarding-school in the country for a couple of years, in order to qualify you for my maid ; and, if you behave yourself well, I may, perhaps, in the course of time, make you my companion.'—I was at a loss for words to thank my generous benefactress ; I fell upon my knees ; and the effusions of my grateful heart flowed in copious torrents down my cheeks.

“ The woman who had brought me from the Park now entered the room. ‘ Donaldson,’ said the lady, ‘ take this poor little creature to your apartment ; let her be washed, and put her on some clean apparel, if you can find any in the wardrobe to fit her.’—Her injunction was instantly obeyed ; and, in the space of an hour, I underwent a total meta-

morphose. I was then re-conducted to the lady, who expressed her astonishment at the wonderful transition. Indeed, I could scarcely credit my own eyes. On passing through the room, (which was encircled with mirrors from the cieling to the floor), I beheld my long flaxen tresses flowing in ringlets about my shoulders, which, but an hour before, had been concealed by a little dirty mob-cap, fastened under my chin. But in order to avoid prolixity, it may suffice to repeat, that in the course of a week, I was provided with every necessary article of dress appropriate to my years. I was then, by this *careful* and *humane* housekeeper, taken to a boarding-school, about ten miles from town; where I experienced the first interval of happiness which I had ever known. At



the expiration of two years, I was sent for by my benefactress. The great improvement in my manners, and the wonderful progress I had made in my education, astonished her; and she expressed herself much charmed with my personal attractions. I felt a secret delight in beholding three young ladies nearly of my own age, whom Mrs. K— informed me were her nieces. I had been at home about a-week, when, one evening, contrary to the usual custom, Mrs. K—— entered the housekeeper's room, where I was constantly employed at my needle. She seated herself by my side: 'Fanny,' said she, 'I am pleased to perceive that the education which I have bestowed upon you, has so polished your manners, and cultivated your understanding, that I think



I may venture to introduce you amongst my friends, without any fear that you will cause me to blush for the experiment. Some gentlemen of my acquaintance,' continued she, 'intend to honor me with their company this evening. They will probably compliment you; tell you that you are a lovely girl; salute you; perhaps make love to you. Gentlemen, .Fanny, are a sort of privileged beings; they think they have a right to act as they please. So, my dear, you will dress yourself in your last new robe and petticoat, and Miss Emily shall fetch you to the drawing-room.'—I thanked my benefactress for her condescension, and hastened to my apartment to adorn my person, eagerly anticipating the pleasure of the novel scene I was about to experience. I had scarcely

finished dressing, when a thundering rap at the door announced the arrival of the visitors. O how my young heart palpitated ! I trembled, yet I knew not wherefore ; and when I was summoned to attend the company, my agitation increased.—‘ You look charmingly to-night, Fanny,’ said Emily : ‘ you will certainly captivate his grace.’—When we entered the drawing-room, I was rather surprised to find Mrs. K— in conversation with an *elderly* gentleman—for I had figured to my imagination, that the party would consist of *several young men of fashion*. Mrs. K—, in a few minutes, withdrew, saying, as she quitted the room, ‘ Don’t look so sheepish, Fanny : you don’t want for sense ; and your education, I thought, would have taught you to enter a room with a

little more air and dignity. But your grace will excuse her awkwardness,' turning to the old gentleman.

"We were now left alone. He eagerly seized my trembling hand.—'Lovely girl! sweet innocence!' said he, 'that simplicity, that modest blush charms me beyond the power of description!'—He now led me to a seat; and, placing himself by my side, he continued—'Your worthy friend, my dear, was resolved the colouring of the picture should fall infinitely short of the original. She described you a pretty little peasant girl; but you have beauty that would tempt an hermit; a form that would mock the sculptor!'—And, after viewing me with a frightful wildness in his eyes, he caught me in his arms, and carried me to a sofa, where, with the

most lascivious kisses; he continued to hold me in a close embrace, until I became almost breathless.

“ Alas, gentle reader; young, innocent, and ignorant, as I then was, nature had instructed me that such behaviour was a breach of propriety, and an insult to female delicacy. I sprang from his rude grasp, and burst into tears. ‘ I would rather go to my own apartment, if you please, sir,’ said I, in a tremulous voice, fearful of giving offence: for, heaven is my witness, I knew not, in reality, what such conduct meant; yet was confident all was not right. ‘ You little foolish girl,’ said he, ‘ why are you thus agitated? do not you know it will be to your interest to comply with my wishes? I mean to take you to myself; you will

shortly become the envy of your own sex, and the admiration of ours. If you continue here, you are fated to be the slave of every man's desires, who may wish to enjoy you. Promise me, that no other shall partake of those charms, and I will leave you for the present; and to-morrow I will fetch you to my own house: but keep this to yourself, for I know your friend, Mrs. K——, does not wish to part with you.' I forced a smile of seeming approbation, thanked him, curtsied, and withdrew.

The veil of ignorance was now withdrawn, and I saw the precipice on which I stood. In a few minutes after I had reached the housekeeper's room, my apprehensions were confirmed by the entrance of the old Jezzabel. - 'I congratulate you, Fanny,' said she, on



the noble conquest which you have made; his Grace the Duke of —, is really quite enamoured of you, and will be your constant visitor. You was rather alarmed, I understand, at his first overtures of love:—but he is a charming man, and you will soon be reconciled to his addresses. Sophia, Emily, and Julia, were as coy as you, when they were as young; but now they enjoy the fruits of their complacency, by receiving the most profuse presents from their admirers. His Grace has informed me that he will take you to some place of public amusement to-morrow, and then pass the remainder of the evening with you at home.’ The seducing, artful wretch, was thus running on in a strain of panegyric, when a loud rap at the door attracted her attention; she instantly



quitted the room, which, fortunately, saved me from the dreadful alternative of a reply. Mrs. Donaldson now advised me to retire to my own apartment, which was a small room upon the attic story. ‘Take off your new clothes, Fanny,’ said she, ‘you will not see any more company to night.’

For reasons best known to themselves, I was not allowed to sleep or associate with any of the other girls. On passing the drawing-room door, in my way to my apartment, I heard several voices that sounded like persons intoxicated. Curiosity prompted me to place my ear to the key-hole. ‘When is this little frigate, you have bragged so much of, to be launched? eh!’ cried a gentleman, in an impetuous tone; ‘I thought she would have been under

weigh by this time; remember you have appointed me to the command."

'My dear captain, you are so impatient,' replied this infamous old procuress; 'I intend to fetch her from the country in a day or two. Come, let me prevail upon you to stay with Sophia to-night; and I give you my word, that you shall see this chicken of my own rearing, before the week is out.'

"I had heard enough to convince me that I was the intended sacrifice: I stole gently up stairs, and reached my own apartment unperceived. It was about the hour of nine. I reflected, that on the following day, my ruin was inevitable; how was it to be averted? flight seemed impracticable."

"Should this detail of my miseries ever be perused, the reader will wonder

by what means I had, at so early an age, imbibed those rigid notions of honor; bred up, as I had been from my infancy, with people who never concerned themselves about my morals. I cannot, in any other way, account for the horrors I felt at the idea of a vicious life, than that nature had inspired an innate principle of virtue, and whispered to my heart, ‘*Pursue the path which honor points; for honor ever meets its own reward.*’ I followed its sacred dictates, and am now comparatively happy.’

“ I have drank deep of affliction’s cup, even to the very dregs; but I thank that providence which has preserved me inviolate to the present moment; it is a consolation which the wicked can never rob me of. The orphan’s prayer was never yet put up to heaven in vain.

Mercy is a divine attribute; and when the measure of my woes is full, the guardian angel, who presides over innocence, will guide my anxious soul to that asylum of everlasting happiness, where the guilty can never come.—But I am degressing.”

“When I had changed my dress, it occurred to me, that I could descend the back stair-case, where, it was very probable, at that time of night, I should not be met by any of the family, as they were all engaged at the other end of the house. I did so, and, unperceived, got out at the back-door, which led into a narrow court. Fear of detection gave me wings; for I flew, rather than walked, the distance of several streets, without stopping. I, at length, found myself in a square, almost breathless.

I sat down on the steps of a door—the watchman was taking his rounds; and I had sat but a few minutes, before he, with a sternness which terrified me, demanded why I sat there? ‘Come, come,’ said he, ‘get you home, girl; this is not a time of night to be lounging about people’s doors; I shall take you to the watch-house if you do not go about your business.’ I could not make a reply at that moment, but burst into a flood of tears; he, however, waited for my answer. ‘Dear, dear, good sir,’ said I, sobbing, ‘I have *no home* to go to, indeed I have not.’ He remained silent; encouraged by which, I told him my sad story. ‘Were I sure,’ resumed he, ‘that what you have related is true, I would take you home to my wife, rather than you should lie in the



street.' The simplicity of my reply gained me credit with the humane watchman, and he accordingly conducted me to his home. He repeated to his wife all that I had told him: the tear of sympathy stood in her eye, as she attentively listened to him. When he concluded, she turned and welcomed me, with an embrace, to her humble dwelling. The good man now took his leave, and went again to his duty. His wife informed me that she was a laundress; 'and if,' continued she, 'you think that you can earn an honest bit of bread by industry, I will employ you; for I often want an assistant.' I joyfully accepted her kind offer. The following morning she proposed taking my cloaths, which consisted of white muslin, to a sale-shop, and exchanging



them for such as were better adapted to my situation ; I cheerfully consented to her proposal. In the course of an hour she returned with a neat dark cotton gown, a stuff petticoat, coloured handkerchief, apron, &c.

“ Dear, good creature ! her generous exertions to serve me, at once excited in my heart the sentiments of love, gratitude, and esteem.

“ Under this humble, but hospitable roof, I continued for some months ; I ate the bread of industry ; I earned it with honor, and enjoyed it with contentment. But alas ! there was a dreadful fatality attached to every thing which concerned me through life ! Some ominous planet surely presided at my birth, and influenced my destiny. During my residence with these people, nothing oc-

curring to render me uncomfortable until one fatal day, when the good woman sent me on a little business into the city. Just as I was crossing the end of Chancery-lane, I recognized the features of her whom I once had called by the endearing name of mother. I instantly accosted her: at first she did not recollect me; but when I told her who I was, she began to upbraid me. ‘So, Fanny! I find you ran away from your master and mistress! Pray what do you think of yourself?’—I requested her patiently to hear my reasons; she complied. I told her progressively all that had befallen me; but when I came to that part of my narrative where I had been two years at school, she bit her lips, and said, ‘Then, Fanny, you can read and write!’—She paused, and then

resumed : ‘ Well, give me your address, and I will come and see you before I leave town ; for I reside now in the country. I am very glad to find that you are a good girl. But pray where does this wicked woman live, from whom you have escaped ? ’—I satisfied her curiosity, gave her my own address, and took my leave. Fatal candor ! the mournful cause of my present sufferings.

Two days subsequent to this event, as I was busily employed at my usual occupation, the door was suddenly opened ; and, oh ! horrid to describe ! the abandoned old wretch entered, followed by two men. She gazed at me for a minute ; then turning to the men, and pointing to me with a malicious smile, said—‘ There, gentlemen, is your prisoner ; do your duty. ’—She then

flounced out of the room; and I was torn from the poor affectionate woman, who, by this time, felt an attachment to me, similar to that of a parent. I was conveyed to this place, where the tender-hearted creature continued to visit me every opportunity. At last, death robbed me of her: she who was the only consolation left me on this side the grave.

“ The path which I have trod through life has been strewn with thorns; but a garden of delight forms the limit of the prospect. I now, methinks, stand even on the verge of eternity, wishfully viewing the realms beyond the skies, those blissful regions which my wearied soul pants to arrive at.”

*Here concludes the Manuscript.*

The fate of this noble-minded, unfortunate girl, failed not to meet with real commiseration from our heroine. The sad detail breathed the language of truth: it exemplified the beauties of innate virtue. "Oh," said Sabina, mentally, "what heart could ever be so impenetrably steeled to the feelings of humanity, thus to meditate the ruin of so exalted a mind? thus to plunge into misery such innocence and beauty? Her sad story will never be obliterated from my memory."

It was a late hour ere Sabina retired to her bed for the remainder of the night; but sleep had fled from her eyes. The morning, for which her anxious bosom eagerly panted, at length arrived, and was productive of events, not only wonderful in themselves, but of a nature



calculated to dissipate all the horrors she had sustained the preceding day. The keeper of the prison had dispatched proper officers to search the house in which Sabina had been arrested, where they discovered sufficient evidences of guilt to take the master, the mistress, and servant, into custody; for the first and most incontestable proof of their villainy was, that their own plate, for which the unoffending Sabina had been arrested, was secreted in a cavity of the floor, with the addition of numberless other articles extremely suspicious. The keeper, on this discovery, sent immediately to Mr. Cookson a brief statement of Miss Melford's situation; when he instantly received instructions for her liberation. Whilst he was communicating this agreeable intelligence,



Mrs. Delrymple's housekeeper arrived. "O my dear young lady" said she, "Thank heaven, my mistress will be at home to-night or to-morrow; and then I am sure she will not let you stay in this dismal place."—"My good woman," said the keeper, "you may take Miss Melford home with you *now*; she is no longer a prisoner."—"This is happy news, indeed," replied the old lady. "Aye, I was sure that she did not deserve to be so cruelly treated."

Sabina now prepared to take her leave of this abode of misery, returning her sincere thanks to the keeper for his friendly interposition.—"Madam," said he, "I have done nothing more than what I conceive is a duty which we all owe to injured innocence. For, even the guilty have a *claim* upon our humanity. How

much greater *then* is the *claim* of your wanton sufferings?"—"O good sir," returned Sabina, "your every word breathes the accent of philanthropy. Permit me, before I depart this place, to plead the cause of a wretched female, who has been for sixteen months immured within these walls; and whom, I am persuaded, is a victim to the treacherous machinations of an abandoned woman."—"Ah, Miss Melford," he resumed, "you are not aware of the deceptions practised by artful people; it appears to me to be no very difficult task to impose upon your credulity. Not but there may be such an object as you have depicted; but it is not my province to investigate the concerns of any prisoner unless applied to: they might long remain illegally shut from

the blessings of society unknown to me.” —“ Pardon me, sir,” resumed Sabina, “ for the liberty I have taken ; and accept my most grateful thanks for the interest you have taken in all that concerns myself.” —“ I shall exert myself still farther, Miss Melford,” he replied ; “ for I do not despair of recovering your property.” At this hint a beam of joy played on the features of our heroine. She again thanked the generous keeper ; and, accompanied by the old servant, bade adieu to the habitation of misery.

When they arrived at Mrs. Delrymple’s house, various sensations agitated the bosom of Sabina. What would her guardian think of the premature measures she had adopted by unadvisedly entering upon business in the house of people whose character and mode of

subsistence she was totally ignorant of. The idea, likewise, of apologizing a second time to her generous friends and employers, for having lost their clothes, all of which misfortunes had so rapidly succeeded each other, it not being more than three weeks between the fire and the robbery. On the latter subject she resolved to remain silent until Mrs. Delrymple returned. Poor Fanny, too, she felt most acutely for her sufferings; and therefore banished, for a few minutes, the sorrows that clouded her own prospects; and addressed a letter to the unhappy girl as follows:

“ I have perused your hapless narrative, dear Fanny, with various emotions of pity and contempt; and though the power of serving you is at present withheld from me, yet the sad recital

of your sufferings will never be erased from my memory. The time perhaps may arrive when a change of circumstances will enable me to administer some succour and consolation to you in your present unhappy situation. At all events, depend upon me paying you a visit in a few days. The bearer of this will deliver to you the manuscript. Adieu, dear Fanny, believe me, I subscribe myself in sympathy, your friend,

*Queen Square,*                    "S. MELFORD."  
*Thursday Evening.*

Affairs soon began to wear a different complexion with our heroine; and the tide of affliction seemed to be at ebb. The day subsequent to her leaving the prison, she entered into a full elucidation of all that had befallen her to the ser-



vant of her friend, who could not forbear expressing her astonishment. “ My dear young lady,” said she, “ Why did you not come here when your house was burnt.”—“ I should,” replied Sabina, “ had my worthy friend been in town ; but for reasons, which I shall hereafter explain to Mrs. Delrymple, I did not think it prudent to take that liberty in her absence.”——As our readers must, no doubt, entertain an idea of surprise, that Sabina under her affliction did not immediately fly to the house of a confirmed friend, it will be necessary therefore to enter into a justification of her conduct, by explaining her reasons. It may be remembered, in a foregoing page, that Miss Melford was for a short time with Mrs. Delrymple upon the footing of a companion, which she re-



linquished in consequence of Mrs. Drummond's indisposition ;—and the following circumstance, which occurred in Mrs. Delrymple's family, after Sabina had quitted it, appearing at that time to be a matter of no moment, or in the least interesting to the reader, was passed over.

A few days prior to Mrs. Delrymple's departure from her house, a gentleman, who had for some time paid his addresses to her, was returned from a continental tour, accompanied by his brother and nephew. The above lady, knowing his aversion to a hotel, requested he would with his friends reside in her house during her absence. Those prudential motives it was that influenced the conduct of our heroine ; and during the two days she was there, prior to her

friend's return from Scotland, she carefully concealed herself from every eye except the old housekeeper. At length the wished-for moment arrived, which brought back in safety her beloved friend, who had no sooner entered the doors, when they were in each others arms. Mrs. Delrymple burst into a flood of tears, and exclaimed, "My poor dear girl! but heaven be praised, *you* have escaped the conflagration. I have seen your guardian, Sabina; he has informed me of the dire calamity which has befallen you; but keep up your spirits, my love, there still is happiness in store for you: Mr. Edwards, with your sisters, will shortly be in town, when you will again be re-established, and be rendered comfortable in the affectionate society of your amiable sisters." Thus, in a

strain of generous sympathy, Mrs. Delrymple strove to dissipate the pangs of reflection that struggled in her bosom. “ Ah, my dear madam,” rejoined Sabina, “ my guardian is yet ignorant of my recent sufferings, and I fear he never will forgive me.”—“ What circumstance can have happened, Sabina, more terrible than that which I have already heard ?” continued Mrs. Delrymple. With trembling reluctance, Sabina related her melancholy story : her friend listened with silent attention until she reached that part of it in which she was conveyed to prison. “ How,” replied Mrs. Delrymple, “ have you been in a prison ? And are there then *such* characters existing in a civilized country ? *such* specious villainy ? *such* plausibility assumed under false titles to prey upon

the peace of credulous unsuspecting youth? Oh, my Sabina, *who*, in this depraved and vicious age, can guard against calamity, *conspiracy*, *plunder*; nay, even *assassination*? and every vice that can debase mankind seems indiscriminately to flourish in their career. Your entry into life, my dear, has been chequered with misfortune; an untoward fate has pursued you; yet *you* have a consolation, Sabina, which the guilty mind can never enjoy, conscious innocence, and inward satisfaction. Every step you have pursued, my dear girl, has been well intended: no blame can attach to you; and assure yourself, that nothing shall be omitted on my part to reconcile your guardian, *should* he in any point of view condemn you for what is past."

A loud rap at the door put an end to the conversation; "Excuse me, Sabina," continued she, "I must now pay my respects to the baron."

In the course of a few days, agreeable to Mrs. Delrymple's information, Mr. Edwards, with Mary and Eliza Melford, arrived in town. The good old gentleman conceiving it a tribute of gratitude due to the friend of Sabina, first to pay his respects to Mrs. Delrymple, called in Queen-square, on his way to Sabina's lodgings, where he purposed leaving her sisters, being, as yet, ignorant of the fate of his ward. Just as the hackney-coachman was knocking at the door, Mrs. Delrymple and Sabina approached; having, that morning, been in pursuit of a house. The three sisters instantly reconnoitered each other.

It would be in vain to attempt a delineation of features at this moment: it was like the rays of sudden light, diffusing beauty and animation upon every object. After an absence of some considerable time from those we dearly love, and the chords of sympathy having been long restricted, they vibrate on the senses, act with double force, when relaxed, and the soul gently suppurates into tenderness and affection. During this interesting scene between the orphan sisters, Mrs. Delrymple requested Mr. Edwards would retire, with her, to another apartment; when she seized the opportunity of communicating to that gentleman such part of Sabina's narrative, as she judged was expedient to meet his ear; adding, that she had seen a house, situated in Jer-



myn-street, which she thought extremely well calculated for Miss Melford's business. Mr. Edwards, who was little acquainted with the metropolis, submitted the regulation of the whole plan to the discretion of Mrs. Delrymple, who had already so generously embarked in the gentle office of friendship; and as the baron and his kinsman had, prior to the arrival of Mr. Edwards, left her house, she insisted that he should consider it as his home, during his stay in London. He accepted her polite invitation; and, from that hour, preparations for the establishment of Sabina commenced; and in less than a week, every thing was finally arranged, to the mutual satisfaction of all parties; and our heroine, accompanied by her sisters, took possession of her new

abode, where she had been settled but a few days, when she was called upon to own the different articles of wearing-apparel she had been robbed of, belonging to several ladies; all of which, she had the inexpressible pleasure to behold, were in a state of preservation: but the fifty pounds were irrecoverably lost. That, however, she had little occasion to lament, as the liberality of her friends very soon re-imbursed the loss she had sustained. Being now re-united to her sisters, her heart felt possessed of treasures that compensated all her sufferings. The most flattering prospects awaited her on this (though scarcely twenty years of age) her third entrance into business, and every thing wore the appearance of permanent prosperity; yet she was not truly happy.—A me-

lancholy retrospect of the unfortunate Fanny occupied much of her thoughts: for a heart capable of feeling tenderly for the distresses of others, is often subjected to the most acute pain. She related to her sisters the story of this hapless girl. "Though," said she, "it does not seem within the limits of probability, that I shall ever be capable of effecting her liberty, still, I trust, that the gentle offices of friendship may, in some measure, alleviate her sorrows: I will go to-morrow," continued she, "and take her some nourishment; for her health appears declining very fast." Sabina had not intimated anything to Mrs. Delrymple, concerning this affecting circumstance. She well knew that the beneficent heart of her friend was ever exquisitely alive to the

tender feelings of humanity: her own misfortunes, she thought, had sufficiently exercised every nerve of sensibility; wherefore, then, should she give an additional wound to her compassionate bosom. The following morning, agreeable to her proposal, she set out to visit the unhappy girl. When she had nearly reached the prison doors, she was met by the keeper, who cordially took her hand, and expressed himself happy to see her. "Miss Melford," said he, "you are come very opportunely; for the unfortunate young woman, whose hard destiny you so pathetically lamented to me, is, this morning, released from bondage, by the death of her merciless creditor; but I fear the wretched girl has no refuge but a parish." "Oh, where is she?" ex-

claimed Sabina, "I will instantly fly to her relief." "She is, at present, where you left her, madam," replied he. "Then excuse me, sir," said Sabina, "I shall step and speak to her, with your leave." "Do so, Miss Melford," returned he, "you may possibly suggest some mode of serving the poor friendless girl." Sabina hastened to Fanny, whom she found in tears; but her countenance wore a brighter aspect on the approach of the former. "Do not weep, Fanny," said Sabina, "but rejoice that death has, at last, vanquished your cruel enemy; and the prospect of happier days now appears to welcome you to society." "Oh, madam," she replied, "what allurements has the world for me? What pleasure can I anticipate by regaining my liberty?

A poor miserable orphan, as I am; destitute of garments even to cover my emaciated limbs; without a friend to whom I can fly for shelter from the contempt of an unpitying world; penury and chill want must be my ruthless companions. Alas! I only wish for a poor corner, where I may lay down my weary head, and close my eyes in peace for ever."

"Draw not such a portrait of wretchedness," said Sabina, "but with sweet hope, look forward to many, many years of joy and comfort." And tenderly embracing her, she continued, "Yes, injured Fanny, my house shall be your home; my bosom the asylum of your sorrows: I will go and fetch you such apparel as will be necessary for you to appear in without these wretched doors: farewel, I will be



with you again immediately.” She then darted out of the room, leaving the astonished Fanny; whose feelings of over-flowing gratitude, words would be inadequate to pourtray.

Sabina soon returned, and furnished the poor girl with a neat and decent suit of clothes; then, with a sensation of generous delight, she led her forth to a coach which was waiting at the prison gates, to convey her from that mansion of wretchedness, wherein she had long suffered immeasurable woes.

The sudden transition, and unexpected instance of friendship in our heroine, had nearly overcome the child of misfortune, towards whom it was exhibited: impaired, as was her health and strength, her shattered nerves almost sunk under the pressure of extreme gratitude.

On their arrival at Sabina's house, Mary and Eliza Melford met them at the door, and gave the stranger a cordial welcome. These amiable sisters strove to remove from the mind of Fanny the weight of obligation which seemed to distress her. In a few days she began to recover her health and spirits, sufficient to make herself useful in the work-room; and the grateful girl became perfectly happy, in perceiving that her endeavours would make some restitution for the boundless obligation she was under to her worthy benefactress. A few weeks had cemented that sort of friendship between these lovely females, that they actually idolized each other.

Sabina now began to feel it a duty which she owed to her friend Mrs. Del-

rymple, to communicate this circumstance to her, assured that she would rather applaud the action than condemn it, particularly as each hour's experience was a convincing proof that Fanny possessed every virtue that adorns the human heart.

One morning Mrs. Delrymple, (as she frequently did) called upon Sabina ; and going without ceremony to the apartment where they were all at work ; and after chatting for a few minutes, withdrew, desiring to speak with Sabina below. They retired to the parlour. “ My dear Sabina,” said Mrs. Delrymple, “ Where did you meet with that young person I saw at work ? She is the counterpart of yourself—in personal charms I mean, my love : I think her one of the loveliest girls I ever be-

held." This afforded Sabina an opportunity she had some days sought for; and, without hesitation, disclosed to her every circumstance of their meeting in prison; at the same time presenting her with Fanny's narrative. Mrs. Delrymple, with a placid sweetness in her countenance, gazed for a few minutes on Sabina; and, with a tear of sympathy standing in her eye, took Sabina's hand. "O thou uncommon excellence! dear affectionate girl!" said she, "Such an exemplary instance of tenderness and compassion, adds distinguished lustre to your inestimable virtues. Yes, Sabina, I am highly charmed with your munificence! May you never lack the ability to exercise your pious and humane propensities."

“ O my dear friend !” returned Sabina, “ if my conduct meets your approbation on so light a sketch of her sorrows, what will be your sensations when you have perused her sad story ? all of which I leave for your private meditation.”

Mrs. Delrymple now took her leave, and Sabina proceeded to work. Several ladies called in the course of the day to give orders for ball-dresses for the ensuing week ; and in the evening Sabina was surprised by Mrs. Delrymple’s return, accompanied by a gentleman, whom she introduced as *Baron Van Wellenstorff*. It immediately occurred to Sabina, that he was the gentleman who paid his addresses to her friend. Mrs. Delrymple evinced much agitation on her entrance, the cause of which Sa-



bina could not account for: she fixed her eyes on Fanny; and, drawing a chair by her side, "My dear young lady," said she, "I have, by Miss Melford, been favoured with the perusal of your unhappy narrative: it interests me more than you can imagine."

During this, the baron had entered into conversation with the three sisters, and making some remarks on a very elegant dress which they were finishing.

Mrs. Delrymple continued asking Fanny several questions relative to herself, when, suddenly, the countenance of the latter changed to a deadly pale. "You are unwell!" said Mrs. Delrymple: "I shall soon be better, madam," replied Fanny. "A loved idea



darted across my mind; but it avails not!" sighed she.

"What was it, Fanny?" asked Mrs. Delrymple.

"That gentleman is not of England, madam?" rejoined she.

"He is not," answered Mrs. Delrymple.

"Alas, madam!" said she; "had I ever been so blest as to have known a father! I have been taught to understand that he was a foreigner."

"So your narrative intimates. Pray, my love, what was the name of your nurse?"

"Inglesfield, madam," was the answer.

At that moment the baron started from his seat. "Did I not hear the name of Inglesfield?" said he.

“ This young lady once knew a person of that name,” said Mrs. Delrymple. The baron instantly seized the trembling hand of Fanny: “ Dear, dear young lady !” said he, scarcely articulate, “ lead me where I can again behold the woman who for ten years has deprived me of a darling child.”

Fanny, almost conscious from a secret impulse, that she was the long lost child, was overpowered by her sensations, and sunk back, motionless, in her chair. Sabina ran to her ; and, taking her hand, “ Fanny ! my dear Fanny !” said she ; “ What can this mean ?”—“ It means,” replied Mrs. Delrymple, “ that she has found a father.”

The baron stood as one petrified. A general consternation ensued. Fanny opened her eyes ; and, gazing on the

baron for a few seconds, she burst into a flood of tears, and threw herself at his feet. “Ease at once the tortures of suspense!” cried he; “and say, is not this my daughter? She is! She is! the lovely image of my adored Arabella! Rise, rise my darling to thy father’s bosom, and let me clasp thee in my paternal arms!”

Mrs. Delrymple then addressed the enraptured father. “Turn, my dear baron, turn to Miss Melford; it is to her whom you are indebted for your present happiness. She, it is, who hath snatched from oblivion your long lost treasure.”

He took Sabina’s hand, and pressed it to his lips. “O, madam; how shall I thank you! my child! my own dear Fanny!” continued he, turning to her.

“The semblance thou bearest to thy departed, long-lamented, mother, tells me, indubitably, thou art my daughter.”

—“O my beloved father!” said Fanny; “the endearing name thrills through my filial bosom. Sure it was nature spake instinctively within me when first I heard his voice.”

“O sir!” said Sabina, “this is the most delicious moment of my life! thus to be the happy instrument of transplanting to its native soil this tender flower, which long, long has drooped in the dark shades of obscurity, hid from the genial sun’s exhilarating beams—the suffering victim of a base conspiracy. Yes, sir; you receive to your paternal embrace, your angelic daughter, pure as the morning dew-drop on the May rose-bud! Her princi-

ples as unsullied as her virtue is spotless."

Supreme happiness had in the space of one hour defused its joyful influence around this little groupe. When the first effusions of transport had subsided, the baron entered into a short narration of Fanny's origin. "My dear child," said he, "you are, no doubt, ignorant of your birth: particulars on that subject you shall know hereafter. It may suffice at present to inform you, that having lost your mother in your infancy, I entrusted you to the care of an Englishwoman, who was, at that time, a domestic in my family. Having married a German in this country, she accompanied him to Amsterdam, where he died, leaving her in such circumstances as obliged her to seek her liveli-



hood; which she procured by servitude. She conducted herself with propriety and integrity in my family for several years; and I confided so implicitly in her fidelity, that I sent her to England, placing you under her care, where I purposed to have you educated. I gave her instructions, and furnished her with the means of rearing you suitable to your birth. She frequently gave me satisfactory accounts of you during the first five years. In the sixth year I came to England; joyfully anticipating the delight of again beholding my lovely little daughter. But alas! all was a dark unfathomable chaos! the nurse was flown, and all my researches proved fruitless."

"Good heavens! exclaimed Mrs. Delrymple; "what a flagrant breach



of confidence has this vile monster been guilty of! O my dear baron! how will your indignation be raised when you hear the recital of this dear girl's injuries and sorrows! Yet how will you be charmed with her magnanimity! Surely an inherent greatness of soul has influenced her conduct! She has been the peculiar care of heaven! the guardian angel which presides over innocence has wonderfully preserved her to the present moment. To-morrow you shall know every particular of what so nearly concerns you. It begins to grow late; we will take leave of our young friends for the night. Fanny, my love, we will not remove you from your happy asylum at present."

The baron again embraced his daughter. "Long, long, my child," said he,

“ have I pined in secret anguish for the attainment of this auspicious moment.”

The happy party now bid each other a good night, and separated.

“ The following day, the baron engaged a ready-furnished house (having, previous to the discovery of his daughter, resided at an hotel), to which she was removed, with exultation, by her doating father.

The liberality of the baron was unlimited towards Sabina ; the most profuse presents were lavished on her for the unprecedented interest she had taken in the fate of his beloved daughter. An intercourse of friendship was inseparably kept up between the families.

One morning, about a week subsequent to this extraordinary incident,

Mrs. Cookson called on Sabina, accompanied by a Mrs. Alton, a young widow just arrived from Bengal. "Miss Melford," said Mrs. Cookson, "I have recommended you to this lady, who wishes to have some dresses of the newest fashion made up immediately. Have you any knowledge of Mrs. Alton, my dear? I understand that ye were bred up within a few miles of each other."

"I am a total stranger to the name of Alton, madam," replied Sabina; "yet I think I have some recollection of the lady's face. Were you not educated at York, madam?"—"I was," answered she, with a smile. "Do you not remember the name of Onslow?"

"I do, indeed. You then are, my dear Sophia, companion of my happier days," sighed she.

“ The same ; and, believe me, my dear Miss Melford, I am sincerely rejoiced at meeting with my early friend so unexpectedly, after an absence of eight years from my native country.”

The conversation which followed revived in the breast of Sabina the painful recollection of departed friends. Mrs. Cookson perceived the struggle, and waved the subject. “ Come, Mrs. Alton,” said she, “ You must take another opportunity of calling upon Miss Melford : you know we have a visit to pay this morning in Portland-place. Mrs. Wentworth will feel herself highly offended if you do not pay her your first respects on your arrival in England. Mr. Wentworth, I understand, is returned from Bath in a state

of convalescence." "I am happy to hear it," said Mrs. Alton, "when the dear old gentleman left Bengal, his health was very precarious."

During this topic, Sabina was silent; she strove to conceal the sensations with which her bosom was agitated. The ladies now took their leave, and proceeded to pay their intended visit.

When the usual compliments, at meeting, were over, Mrs. Alton jocosely related to Mrs. Wentworth, the singular instance of meeting with an old school-fellow in the capacity of a mantua-maker. "Miss Melford," continued she, "is really a charming young woman," "and an unfortunate one," rejoined Mrs. Wentworth. "She is, indeed," added Mrs. Cookson: "she has met with the most unmerited persecu-



tions." "Pray, madam," said Mr. Wentworth, "do you know the origin of the young person you have been mentioning? I am somewhat interested in that name." "She is an orphan," replied Mrs. Cookson, "and was brought up in Yorkshire." "Enough, madam," said he.

Mrs. Wentworth then entered into the detail of Sabina's house being burnt, and her subsequent calamities. Mr. Wentworth arose from his seat, walked hastily across the floor, applied his handkerchief to his eyes, "Poor girl," sighed he, and quitted the room.

"Oh! the dear, dear, good man," said Mrs. Alton, "how accutely he feels for the sufferings of his fellow-creatures."



“ There is something labouring in his breast, which he cares not to reveal,” said Mrs. Wentworth; for I remember, on our arrival in England, how greatly he lamented his inability to visit Yorkshire, when his physician advised him to go to Bath immediately. I never urged him on the subject, fearful that he might deem me guilty of impertinent curiosity: and, as I do not wish to pry into any concerns which wear the appearance of mystery, I shall continue to be silent on the matter.” The entrance of young Mr. Wentworth closed the conversation, and the ladies took their leave.

The following morning Mr. Wentworth ordered the carriage. “ I am going into the city, my dear,” said he

to his wife; "if you have any visits to make that way, I can set you down."

"No," said Mrs. Wentworth, "but with your leave, I will accompany you, as I intended calling to-day at my silk-mercier's, upon Ludgate-hill; and, on my return, I have some orders to give my mantua-maker."

Breakfast being over, they stepped into the carriage, and drove towards the city. Mr. Wentworth was particularly grave and thoughtful. When the carriage stopped in Jermyn-street, at Miss Melford's house; "You will not tarry long, my dear," said he, "I will wait your return."

Mrs. Wentworth alighted and entered the house; in a few minutes she came back, attended by Sabina; the old gen-

tleman viewed her with a penetrative scrutiny; Mrs. Wentworth seated herself in the carriage, and they drove off.

Sabina's return to the work-room alarmed her sisters. "What has happened to distress you, Sabina," said Eliza Melford. "Nothing of moment, my love," answered she; a mere visionary idea."

In a few days Mr. Edwards arrived. He informed them, that a circumstance of the greatest importance to their future welfare would oblige them to relinquish business, and return into Yorkshire. "I have," said Mr. Edwards, "received a letter very unlooked-for, yet which gives me infinite pleasure, as I find that the offspring of a worthy man is not forgotten. "This evening, my good girls," continued he, "you will

have the felicity of embracing a venerable man, who is nearly allied to you."

Sabina, clasping her hands together, exclaimed, "Then my suspicions were

prophetic; the name of Wentworth I remembered to have heard when I was

quite a child," "True, my dear," re-

sumed Mr. Edwards; but the name has

long been a stranger to this country,

from a supposition that he was dead.

Heaven be praised, he yet lives! and

those he left behind him, I am rejoiced

to learn, still lives in his memory. I

must now leave you for a few hours,

my dear young friends; business of im-

portance calls me hence, I shall see

you again in the evening; until then,

farewel."

Accordingly, in the evening, Mr. Edwards returned, accompanied by Mr.

Wentworth, who, when he beheld the three lovely girls, engaged industriously at their occupation, turned to Mr. Edwards, "This is a glorious sight," said he, with emphasis. "I thank you, my good friend; you have proved yourself worthy the sacred trust, which, upwards of forty years ago, I imposed upon you."

Sabina and her sisters arose from their seats; Mr. Wentworth gazed at them with admiring tenderness. "My dear children," said he, "in me you behold your grandsire; from this moment I proclaim you to the world as the beloved offspring of my dear departed son, independent of its favors or its frowns."

These amiable girls shed a tear of filial affection; the tear was reciprocal;



for the big drop rolled down the furrowed cheek of Mr. Wentworth. "I have given instructions to your worthy guardian," resumed he, "to fit up the old family mansion-house for your reception, to which I shall annex a proper establishment for you and your sisters; your brother I shall place in a banking-house in which I am concerned." "I purpose purchasing a seat in Yorkshire, which is now upon sale, for the country residence of my legitimate son. My wife is yet ignorant of the relationship I bear to you; when she is made acquainted with the circumstance, she will heartily participate in the happiness I now enjoy: for she possesses a soul above those vulgar prejudices which influence narrow minds."



“ Now, Miss Melford,” said Mr. Edwards, “ I would advise you to speedily finish such business as you may have in hand; mean time, I shall settle with the landlord of your house; no doubt he will soon find a tenant: we will then prepare for our journey into the north.”

“ This end once accomplished, my friend,” said Mr. Wentworth, “ I shall console myself in the evening of my days, conscious of having acted as becomes a christian, and meet the last dissolving stroke of fate with resignation.”

Sabina poured out her thanks to her new-discovered relative, as did her sisters; she felt more than she was able to describe. The gentlemen having arrangements to make, necessary for the

intended establishment, took an affectionate leave of the young ladies. They were no sooner gone, than the sisters naturally began to expatiate on the wonderful event which had restored to them a parental blessing. They were shortly interrupted by the arrival of Mrs. Delrymple and Fanny. In that lady's bosom Sabina could, without reserve, deposit the inmost secret of her heart; she hesitated not a moment to acquaint her with all that had passed. Mrs. Delrymple congratulated her on the great acquisition she had met with to her future happiness. "And it affords me," added she, "peculiar satisfaction at this time, Sabina, for I came this evening to inform you that, in a few weeks, I shall be united to the Baron; after which, we shall leave the kingdom;

and to know that you are under the protection of so worthy a relation, will make me truly happy. But you appear grave, my dear." "How," returned Sabina, "can I view the approach of that moment which deprives me of so valuable a friend as you, my dear madam, without a pang of regret? Is it not to your unwearied goodness that I owe all the happiness I now possess?"

"No, my dear," replied Mrs. Delymple, "it is to your own exemplary virtues, and the wise decrees of omnipotence, that you are indebted: but come, we will drop this subject." "Have you heard from Captain Aubery lately? Are you still the inexorable fair you were a twelvemonth ago?"

“ I have received a letter, madam,” answered Sabina; a sweet blush, which accompanied the confession, spoke the feelings of her heart. “ I shall ever, madam,” continued she, “ revere the memory of Captain Aubery with the sincerest sentiments of gratitude” “ Is that all, my dear?” resumed Mrs. Delrymple; “ but gratitude, pity, and esteem, are nearly allied to love. The early wanderings of the heart are sometimes misinterpreted; but as the judgment slowly ripens, the tender passions implanted in the bosom rapidly shoot forth to full bloom, and hasten to maturity.”

Sabina felt conviction in this observation, smiled, and waved the subject.

A general conversation ensued, until a late hour obliged them to part for the night.

Many days were wholly engrossed by business; the necessary preparations for their departure began to take place; a day seldom passed during that time, but Mr. Wentworth and Mr. Edwards paid them a visit.

Mrs. Wentworth, the moment that she was made acquainted with the alliance, hastened to Jermyn'-street, and, with maternal tenderness, assured the amiable sisters of her unalterable esteem. "I once," continued she, "was blessed with a lovely daughter; the striking resemblance which you, Miss Melford, bear to her, occasioned

me some very severe pangs on my first knowledge of you." "Oh! could I, at that time, have formed the most distant idea of the consanguinity which subsisted, I should have fostered you in my bosom, and saved you from the cruel vicissitudes of adverse fate, which have hitherto beset you: but enough of that, it is past, and brighter days appear."

Sabina's heart swelled with gratitude and filial affection; it fluttered at her lips, and prevented articulation; she fell on her knees; her sisters followed her example; Mrs. Wentworth raised and embraced them: she wiped away the starting tear, and thus resumed, "I purpose accompanying you into Yorkshire. My son will shortly be united



to a young lady of birth and splendid connections; and, in order to avoid the *etiquette* which is always observed in fashionable circles, I wish to retire to the country. At my time of life, the fatigue of visiting and receiving company is what I wish to shun. In the society of you and your sisters, I shall pass my hours in a sort of ease and tranquillity suited to my years and disposition. Not that I mean, my dears, to deprive you of such recreations and amusements as are congenial to youth; by no means: we shall form our little parties of pleasure agreeable to a country residence, divested of ceremony, parade, or magnificence. Mrs. Alton, whom, I understand, was known to

you at an early period of life, is going to pay a visit to her parents in Yorkshire; she is a charming lively woman, and will, doubtless, prove a great acquisition to our society. In short, I anticipate a world of happiness from this unforeseen and truly fortunate discovery."

"Oh, madam," said Sabina, "your amiable condescension so greatly exceeds what *me* or *my sisters* could ever have expected or aspired to, that words are inadequate to express our high sense of obligation. The flattering portrait of felicity which you have drawn in such glowing colours, animates my heart, and makes it overflow with gratitude. It will ever be my highest am-

bition, and the study of my future life, to merit your good opinion."

"I sincerely believe so, my dear," returned Mrs. Wentworth; "to-morrow morning I shall take you with me a shopping, as you must, previous to your leaving London, make an addition to your wardrobe."

A loud rap at the door now obliged Sabina to withdraw, which put an end to the conversation; she presently returned, accompanied by Mrs. Alton, who, in her usual strain of vivacity, took Sabina by the hand, and addressing herself to Mrs. Wentworth, "My dear madam, I am rejoiced to learn that our little mantua-maker here, is become one of us. You shall actually leave off making gowns, Miss Melford, and go

with me into Yorkshire: shan't she, madam?"

"That is the plan already adopted, Mrs. Alton," said Mrs. Wentworth, "and I promise myself the pleasure of making one of the party."

"That is a pleasure, madam," returned Mrs. Alton, "that I could not expect at so particular a crisis." "You allude, I suppose, to the nuptials of my son, madam; it is that very circumstance which prompts me to retirement. I certainly shall be present at the ceremony," continued this venerable lady, "and then purpose leaving the happy pair to encounter the subsequent parade amongst their young friends: they can dispense with the company of an old

woman." "I am delighted at the occasion, madam," said Mrs. Alton; "their loss will be my gain; your society will be a treasure to my beloved parents, and improvement to me and my young friends; but I must take my leave.—For you must know, madam," continued she, turning to Mrs. Wentworth, "that I am going to make love to Mr. Campbell this morning, at the particular request of his sister, your daughter-in-law elect: would you believe that the poor, melancholy, moping creature has intimated his intention of going to Bath, previous to his sister's marriage? It is most astonishing that so young a man should shun those scenes of gaiety and mirth which the generality of his sex pursue with avidity."

“ Your embassy, Mrs. Alton, I have no doubt will be crowned with success.” said Mrs. Wentworth.

The ladies now took their leave, and the day was closed by a parting visit from Mr. Edwards, who was to leave London that evening, in order to make some arrangements necessary for the reception of Mrs. Wentworth and her *Protegés*.

In the course of a week, Mrs. Delrymple's marriage with the Baron took place. The three Miss Melford's were present at the nuptials, which were solemnized with privacy; there being only one gentleman, a friend of the Baron's, Fanny, and the above young ladies, present on the occasion. The



day was celebrated at Richmond; and it being the last which Sabina and her sisters would have an opportunity of passing with their beloved friends, prior to their leaving London, Fanny eagerly seized the first moment that offered to pour out the feelings of her grateful soul to Sabina. “ My dear Miss Melford! my more than sister!” said she, a tear glistening in her languid eye; “ I cannot endure the idea of parting from you, perhaps to meet no more! it really makes me wretched.” “ O, yes, my dear girl,” replied Sabina, with a forced gaiety, “ we shall meet again, doubt not. The secrets recorded in the voluminous book of fate, we are not permitted to descry; but something whis-

pers to my mind, that there stands registered in those occult, and yet unrevealed pages, many happy events, that will render to us both ample tribute for all our sorrows past."

These lovely girls were thus exchanging their mutual professions of friendship, when Mrs. Delrymple, now *Baroness Van Wellenstorff*, discovered them seated in an alcove in the garden. "Hey-day, ladies!" exclaimed she, "why this secret retreat, and these swollen eyes?" "My dear madam," replied Sabina, "pardon this little weakness; we were only lamenting the separation which is so soon to take place."

"Ah, my dear girls," said the Baroness, "how prone is human na-

ture to repine; the seeds of discontent are sown in our hearts: for when indulgent heaven, in pity to our sufferings, kindly removes from us a load of anguish, still we murmur at imaginary troubles. This propitious morn has witnessed my union with the best of men, his every wish is centered in mine and his daughter's happiness: yet, my dear girls, under all these prospects of permanent felicity, there are moments, when I search the secret recesses of my heart, I still find rankling there a festering wound, which no specific can ever heal: but of that no more. I will obliterate reflection, and shall expect, ladies, that you will do the same." The Baroness then taking a hand of each,

they returned to the house; and the day was concluded with cheerfulness.

As the time was near at hand, when the Baron and his family were to embark for Holland, they took a final leave of the young ladies that evening.

Mr. Wentworth, junior, and Miss Campbell were, in a few days, married by special licence; after which, the elder Mrs. Wentworth, Sabina, and her sisters, set off for Yorkshire, where we will leave them for the present, and make some enquiries into the fate of the long-neglected Aubery.

END OF VOL. I.









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